

HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT EIR/EIS/EIS
RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

7.0 COMMENT LETTERS AND RESPONSES

7.1 ORGANIZATION

This chapter includes responses to letters, emails, and oral comments received on the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS (DEIR/EIS/EIS). A reproduction of each letter or email received during the public review period that addresses the DEIR/EIS/EIS precedes each response to comment. Responses are also provided for comments received at the TRPA APC Hearing on September 10, 2014, the USFS LTBMU Workshop on September 18, 2014 and the TRPA Governing Board Hearing on September 24, 2014. Each comment letter, email, or meeting minutes has been numbered and grouped into one of four categories:

Federal, State, Regional, and Local Agency Comments

1. Sharit, Ben, Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, 10/7/14
2. Drozdoff, Leo, Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, 10/17/14
3. Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of State Parks, 10/17/14
4. Harrison, Elizabeth, Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of State Lands, 10/20/14
5. Bartlett, Tina, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 10/20/14
6. Port, Patricia, United States Department of the Interior, Pacific Southwest Region, 10/21/14
7. Thomaselli, Lauren, City of South Lake Tahoe, 10/23/14
8. Wright, Patrick, California Tahoe Conservancy, 10/27/14
9. Goforth, Kathleen, United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX, 10/28/14

Stakeholder Comments

10. Bennington, Mary, Tahoe Rim Trail Association, 10/20/14
11. Fish, Ben, Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association, 10/27/14
12. Ames, Laurel, Tahoe Area Sierra Club, 11/2/14

Public Comments

13. Thomas, Ralph, 8/28/14
14. von Hurwitz, Lon, 9/5/14
15. Ribaud, Carl, 9/17/14
16. Humphries, Phil, 9/23/14
17. Waller, Ellie, 9/24/14
18. O Bray, Perry, 9/26/14
19. Tevlin, Sean, 9/26/14
20. Garrison, Dan, Resorts West, 10/7/14
21. Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, Tahoe South, 10/9/14
22. Koster, John, Harrah's/Harveys Lake Tahoe, 10/10/14
23. Murillo, Kindred, Lake Tahoe Community College District, 10/13/14
24. Ronan, Patrick, Tahoe Lakeshore Lodge and Spa, 10/13/14
25. Tahoe Douglas Visitors Authority, 10/14/14
26. Hollingsworth, Tamara, Tahoe Chamber of Commerce, 10/14/14
27. Steinbach, John, Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel, 10/14/14

28. Anderson, Robert, Fromarc Insurance Agency Inc., 10/15/14
29. Slack, Sam, Resorts West, 10/16/14
30. Ditchkus, Stephen, Montbleu Resort Casino and Spa, 10/17/14
31. Purvance, Clinton, Barton Health, 10/17/14
32. Atherton, Patrick, Tahoe Chamber of Commerce, 10/18/14
33. Noll, Steve, Design Workshop, 10/21/14
34. Cardoza, Dustin, 10/22/14
35. Chirdon, Lindsay, 10/22/14
36. Colburn, Justin, 10/22/14
37. Greenman, Chris, 10/22/14
38. Hood, Chris, 10/22/14
39. Juha, Hani, 10/22/14
40. Lamb, Jonathan, 10/22/14
41. Poth, Todd, Getaway Reno/Tahoe, 10/22/14
42. Press, David, 10/22/14
43. Scharer, Chuck, Edgewood Companies, 10/22/14
44. Calderwood, Marius, 10/23/14
45. Choi, Cindi, 10/23/14
46. Welch, Martha, 10/23/14
47. Carroll, Sean, 10/24/14
48. Fong, Curtis, TGFT Productions/Bike the West, 10/25/14
49. Galles, Ryan, Sierra House Elementary, 10/26/14
50. Hassett, Bob, Camp Richardson, 10/26/14
51. Cefalu, John, 10/27/14
52. Lowe, Brian, 10/27/14
53. Sidney, Ray, 10/27/14
54. Tanaka, Randy, 10/27/14
55. Warlow, Jim, The Cork and More, 10/27/14
56. Woodward, Todd, 10/27/14
57. Wetter, Matt, 10/28/14

Public Meeting Comments

58. Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Advisory Planning Commission Meeting, 9/10/14
59. United States Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Meeting, 9/18/14
60. Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Governing Board Meeting, 9/24/14

7.2 MASTER RESPONSES

Comments received on trail conflicts and the adequacy of the traffic impact analysis have been addressed in the following master responses.

Master Response 1: External Trail Network Impacts

(Addresses the following comments: NV State Parks: portion of 3-2, 3-3, 3-4, 3-5, 3-6, 3-8, 3-9, 3-11, 3-12, 3-13, 3-14, 3-15, 3-16, 3-17, 3-18, 3-19, 3-20, 3-21, 3-29 through 3-34, 3-36, 3-38 through 44; CTC 8-2, 8-3, 8-4, 8-5, 8-7 through 8-14; TRTA 10-4)

Trail impacts are discussed on pages 3.13-27 through -30 “Adjacent and Connecting National Forest System Lands” of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. The DEIR/EIS/EIS trail analysis focused on the following evaluation criteria: “Would the Project result in decreased availability or degradation of a high quality recreational experience?” To determine significance of the impact, the analysis considered whether the project would result in a decrease in available recreation or the degradation of high quality recreational experience.

By design, the proposed multi-use Panorama Trail would establish a link between the ski area (including the Boulder and Stagecoach base area parking lots), surrounding public lands (e.g., utilizing the existing Tahoe Rim Trail and Van Sickle Connector Trail) and the Van Sickle Bi-State Park and Heavenly Village. The DEIR/EIS/EIS analysis anticipated an increase in usage of these trails as a result of the new link but that any additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail and/or Van Sickle Connector Trail resulting from the proposed projects would be operated consistent with the intended use and management of these trails. As documented in Chapter 2 (Section 2.3.5), Heavenly Mountain Resort would be responsible for monitoring the trails and providing an additional “fair share” (either monetary or in kind) support to operate and maintain the trail to the Trail Management Objectives. Therefore, no significant impact to the overall recreational experience would likely occur.

Comments from Nevada State Parks, California Tahoe Conservancy and the Tahoe Rim Trail Association expressed concerns regarding potential impacts to the existing Tahoe Rim Trail and Van Sickle Connector Trail and the Van Sickle Bi-State Park as a result of the construction of the Panorama Trail and subsequent increase in use of the Tahoe Rim Trail and Van Sickle Connector Trail. The comments focused on three potential impacts: trail use conflicts between hikers and mountain bikes, increased wear and tear and associated maintenance requirements and parking supply and demand at the Van Sickle Bi-State Park. Comments also addressed legal constraints of constructing the Panorama Trail on Nevada State Parks property.

The following response addresses the possibility of increased use of the adjacent trail network and resultant user conflicts. While the Tahoe Rim Trail and Van Sickle Connector Trail currently provide a connection between Heavenly (via the Boulder and Stagecoach base areas) and the Van Sickle Bi-State Park, and while the proposed Panorama Trail would provide another access route (relatively speaking as access would require an almost seven-mile ride to connect from the East Peak Mountain Bike Park to the Van Sickle Connector Trail intersection), degradation of the high quality recreational experience in Van Sickle Bi-State Park is not anticipated. This is because the anticipated use will consist of cross-country mountain bike

riders rather than downhill mountain bike riders who may look to ride laps on the Panorama Trail and Van Sickle Connector Trail using the gondola. The proposed Panorama Trail is unlikely to create a downhill mountain bike emphasis on the Van Sickle Connector Trail for the following reasons:

- Using the Panorama Trail from the proposed East Peak Basin Mountain Bike Park to connect with the Van Sickle Connector Trail would necessitate riding about 7 miles of cross country trail with numerous uphill climbs at high elevation. While this is possible for more skilled, fit and experienced riders, it is a considerable distance to ride prior to intersecting with, and descending, the existing Van Sickle Connector Trail to the Van Sickle Bi-State Park and Heavenly Village. The distance and climbing required to reach the Van Sickle Connector Trail would discourage many lower skill level and downhill oriented mountain bikers from riding this trail. Downhill mountain bikers are more interested in the thrill of the descent, which is a different experience than cross-country riding. In addition to the experience, bikes used in downhill riding are heavier than those used for cross-country riding that makes ascending relatively more difficult.
- As described in the DEIR/EIS/EIS, the proposed mountain bike park would predominantly cater to beginner and intermediate ability-level riders and families who are unlikely to be interested in, or capable of, riding the Panorama and Van Sickle Connector trails.
- Although the Van Sickle Connector Trail would technically be accessible after riding up the Gondola, users would need to ride almost 7 miles of the Panorama Trail to reach it. It but may be possible that a number of local (because they would not be renting bikes up on the mountain) advanced riders would purchase a ticket to ride the Gondola for another way to access the top of the Van Sickle Connector Trail. Accessing the top of the Van Sickle Connector Trail by traveling through the proposed mountain bike park and riding almost seven miles of the Panorama Trail does not constitute the traditional “lift-served” mountain biking experience that people expect and pay for. DEIR/EIS/EIS Figure 3.13-1 shows the trails in relation to the ski lifts. Only the Gondola, Big Easy and Comet lifts would be available to provide lift service to mountain bikes. Because of the time required to make a round trip back to the Gondola Base Station, it is unlikely that local, advanced riders would purchase a ticket to ride the Gondola to access the Van Sickle Connector Trail for repeat, lift-served downhill riding. Local riders would be more likely to continue to park at the existing Boulder or Stagecoach base areas for access to the downhill opportunities offered by the Van Sickle Connector Trail.
- The proposed 0.7-mile connector trail between the Gondola Mid Station and the proposed Panorama Trail would be designated for use by hikers only. Bikes would not be allowed to off-load at the Gondola Mid Station.
- The Van Sickle Connector Trail is currently accessible from the parking lots at the Boulder and Stagecoach lodges. According to user count data obtained during the summer of 2014 by the Tahoe Rim Trail Association, approximately 14 people per day bike the upper section of the Van Sickle Connector Trail (e.g., above the waterfall). This represents a low volume of use compared to other trails in the LTBMU (see page 3.13-7 in the revised DEIR/EIS/EIS for more information). No existing use conflicts are known to occur on the Van Sickle Connector Trail as a result of descending mountain bikes, even though the trail is accessible due to its proximity to south shore communities. The

Panorama Trail would provide opportunities for Epic Discovery guests to depart the mountain on the Van Sickle Connector Trail rather than riding down the gondola, but as mentioned above, this guest would likely be an experienced rider with greater trail etiquette than novice or intermediate riders. Even with the anticipated increased use levels on the Van Sickle Connector Trail, the trail condition would be adequately maintained by the trail management partners. Section 2.3.5 – Epic Discovery Project Design Features and Construction Methods contains guidelines for monitoring and maintenance for trails in the vicinity, outlined under the Trail Partnership Action Plan.

As stated above, the proposed Panorama Trail would, by design, result in increased use of surrounding trails, but it is not anticipated that this increased use would adversely impact the existing recreational experience. Adverse wear and tear impacts to trail conditions are also not anticipated. Use levels of the Van Sickle Connector Trail under proposed conditions would remain lower than use levels on other popular trails on public lands focused on trail management elsewhere in the Tahoe Basin, particularly the Corral Trail and the Flume Trail. Conditions on these trails are effectively maintained by the Forest Service and NV State Parks, despite high use levels. Even with some anticipated increase in use on the Van Sickle Connector Trail, Heavenly and the Forest Service are confident that its condition would be adequately maintained based on the agreement to implement the Trail Partnership Action Plan described below. There are a number of heavily used trails across the Tahoe Basin (including Flume and Corral) that are successfully maintained and managed. It is not expected that the Van Sickle Connector Trail would experience this high level of use, and thus it is anticipated that acceptable trail conditions would be maintained.

The Trail Partnership Action Plan (TPAP) is included in the Project design features (Chapter 2.3.5) to address trail operations, maintenance, and improvements and covers the Panorama Trail, Van Sickle Connector Trail, and Tahoe Rim Trail from Daggett Pass south through Heavenly to the intersection with the Star Lake Connector Trail. The Trail Partnership Action Plan defines roles, responsibilities, and appropriate measures to ensure the maintenance of facilities and the recreational experience across nearby recreational resources by the trail management partners. The Trail Partnership consists of the U.S. Forest Service, Nevada State Parks, California Tahoe Conservancy, Heavenly Mountain Resort, Tahoe Rim Trail Association and Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association. The TPAP identifies management actions to ensure that the user experience would be maintained and protected including adequate signage installed to alert riders of the shared-use nature of this trail, along with proper right-of-way guidance, and monitoring protocols. The TPAP:

1. Includes a statement of mutual intent to work collaboratively to fund, build, operate and maintain a high-quality public outdoor recreation facility;
2. Provides a subsequent set of specific sub-agreements, including an annual maintenance and operating plan between the partners to direct trail design, construction, funding, operations, maintenance, adaptive management and use conflict resolution.
3. Identifies an annual meet and confer process to assess trail conditions and adapt operations, maintenance, improvements, etc. as conditions warrant;
4. Provides a list of potential future management actions that may be taken based on the meet and confer process, including possible effects on other non-trail infrastructure. The

list will have the “including but limited to” concept so as not to preclude other future actions that may be identified;

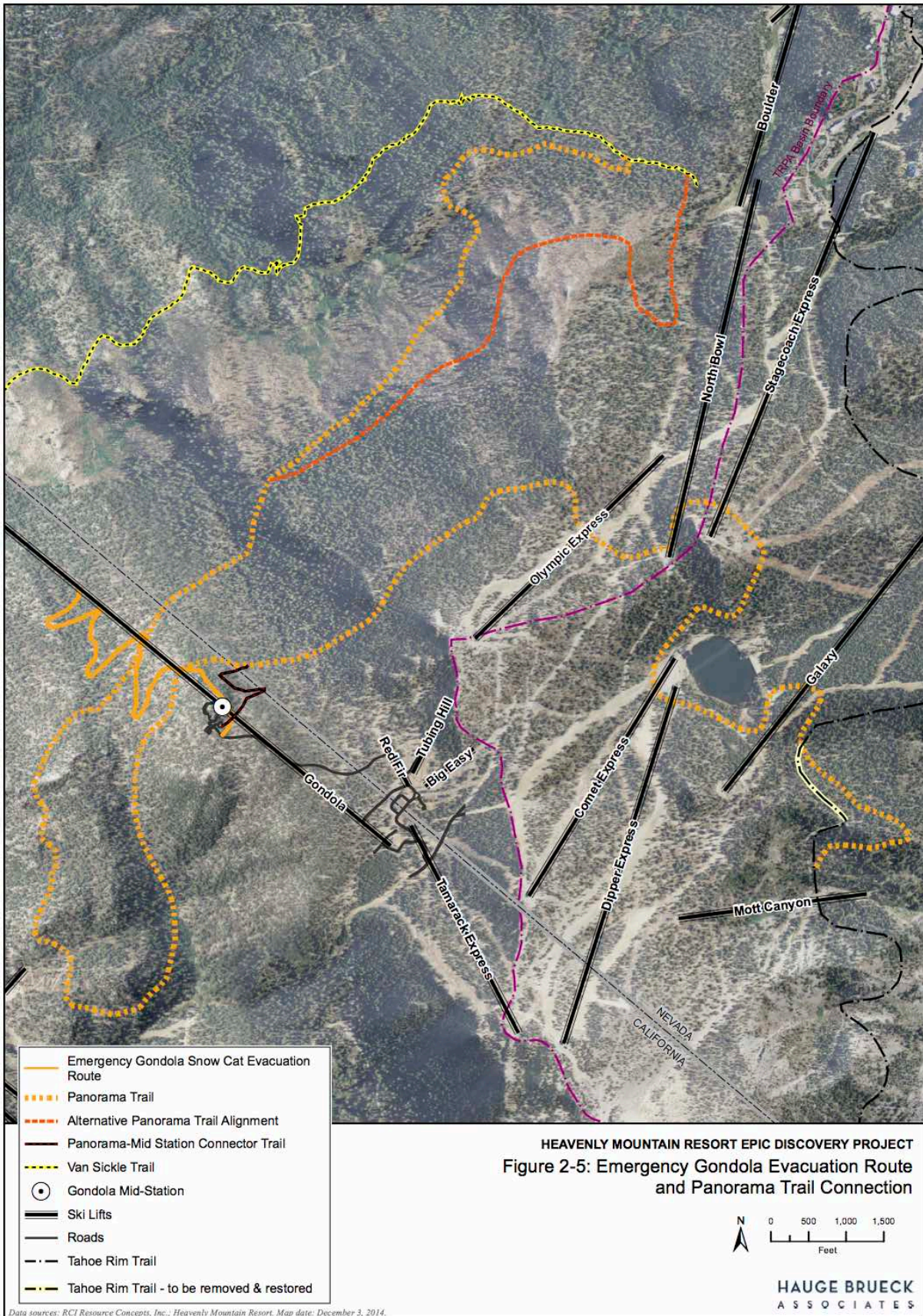
5. Establishes a set of use level triggers beginning with an overall trail assessment that will be monitored and then factored into the meet and confer process in order to respond to conditions on-the-ground; and
6. Includes a sphere of influence map in the Commitment to recognize trail connectivity in the area as a desirable feature and establishes which trails will be included in the agreement.

Implementation of the TPAP will add further insurance that no degradation of high quality recreational experience will occur as a result of the project. Permits for the Panorama trail shall be conditioned on continued monitoring of affected trail usage and implementation of management actions, as set forth in the TPAP or its equivalent, to avoid significant degradation of trail user experience.

The following response addresses the possibility of increased use of the Van Sickle Bi-State Park parking lot as a result of the Panorama Trail construction. Bikers are unlikely to park at the Van Sickle Bi-State Park because riding up the Van Sickle Connector Trail is very difficult, and the top of the Van Sickle Connector Trail is easily accessible from the Boulder and Stagecoach lodges. Visitors who wish to utilize the gondola to access the lift served mountain bike park at Heavenly Mountain Resort would be more likely to park near Heavenly Village and base of the Gondola for convenience. Since Van Sickle Connector Trail mountain bike users are more likely to park at the Boulder or Stagecoach lodges near the top of the trail, or near the Heavenly Village to ride up the Gondola, parking impacts at the Van Sickle Bi-State Park are not anticipated to adversely affect supply. However, as noted above, the Trail Partnership Action Plan Commitment will include monitoring of trail and non-trail facilities and the identification of appropriate actions, if necessary to address adverse conditions.

To address the State of Nevada comment regarding the feasibility of crossing Nevada State Park lands, the lower portion of the proposed Panorama Trail has been relocated. The relocated trail alignment is described in Chapter 2 and would avoid crossing the Van Sickle Bi-State Park by moving the intersection with the Van Sickle Connector Trail approximately 1,000 feet to the east. Refer to the revised DEIR/EIS/EIS Figure 2-5 for the relocated trail alignment. In addition, the relocated intersection between the Panorama Trail, Van Sickle Connector Trail and Tahoe Rim Trail would provide a more convenient location for cyclists to find multiple options for continuing their ride when departing the Heavenly mountain.

In conclusion, the construction of the proposed Panorama Trail is anticipated to benefit recreational use by improving connections between the Heavenly resort and other existing trail networks (e.g., Tahoe Rim Trail and Van Sickle Connector Trail). With the implementation of the TPAP, the increased use of the existing trail network will be monitored to ensure that operation conflicts do not occur and maintenance is conducted as necessary to maintain the existing high quality recreational experience.



Master Response 2: Traffic Impacts

(Addresses the following comments: 9-4 EPA, 12-2 and 12-4 Sierra Club, 17-2 Ellie Waller, and 60-1 Clem Shute)

Comments relating to the traffic analysis (see DEIR/EIS/EIS Chapter 3.7 “Transportation, Parking, and Circulation”) addressed in this Master Response are as follows: The EPA requests that the FEIS update AADT data to include 2012-2013. EPA recommends updating data to provide a clearer picture of roadway congestion and parking demand in relationship to capacity, and an updated traffic count study that looks specifically at summertime roadway congestion to confirm DEIR/EIS/EIS results.

The Sierra Club states that the DEIR/EIS/EIS analyzes traffic issues in the wintertime and fails to discuss summer vehicle trips and parking issues. It comments that while access for the summer uses would be provided using the Heavenly Village Gondola, the DEIR/EIS/EIS traffic section focuses on the Ski Run/Main Lodge areas. Sierra Club recommends that Heavenly operate a summer shuttle to offset increased visitation.

Comments were also received during the DEIR/EIS/EIS TRPA Governing Board hearing asking about the results of the traffic analysis and whether there will be an increase in traffic from the new activities.

The proposed project will primarily generate new visitation during summer months, and as such was the focus of the traffic impact analysis in the DEIR/EIS/EIS. Chapter 3.7 “Transportation, Parking and Circulation” focuses on summer conditions and does not describe wintertime conditions. Heavenly currently has approximately 110,000 visitors during the summer season from June 15th through September 15th. Since these visitors are already coming to Heavenly they are accounted for in the existing conditions (baseline) traffic data that was collected for the DEIR/EIS/EIS; therefore, it is not necessary to account for them separately.

As shown in Table 3.7-10 and discussed in Section 3.7.4.1, new visitors to the Project will generate 448 total new daily trips and 57 total new PM peak hour trips (23 inbound and 34 outbound). New employees will generate 280 daily vehicle trips and 34 PM peak hour (outbound) trips. Table 3.7-12 shows that the Project will generate 728 total daily trips and 91 total PM peak hour trips on a peak summer day.

Although the DEIR/EIS/EIS documents that the Project will result in an increase in daily vehicle trip ends and associated vehicle miles of travel (which will be offset through mandatory contributions to TRPA’s Traffic and Air Quality Mitigation program), the added DVTE’s will not adversely affect traffic conditions or current intersection level of service. The transportation operations analysis includes a detailed intersection level of service and delay analysis for a PM peak hour on a summer Friday, which represents the Tahoe Basin’s peak traffic condition. Wintertime conditions were not used for the analysis. The study area includes intersections near the Heavenly Village Gondola and does not evaluate conditions on Ski Run Boulevard. The analysis was performed using intersection turning movement data from 2013 (provided in Appendix 3.7-A “Traffic Counts Data”). Due to the timing of preparation of the DEIR/EIS/EIS, transportation data was collected on December 13, 2013 and adjusted using a seasonal

conversion factor to reflect peak summer conditions. The seasonal conversion factor was developed by comparing Caltrans' hourly data for all Fridays in December 2013 to Fridays in August 2013. The transportation data and conversion factor is discussed in section 3.7.1.2. Because they offer a reasonable and timely method to conduct traffic analysis, seasonal traffic conversion factors have been used on other projects within the Tahoe Basin (e.g., Homewood Mountain Resort Master Plan).

The traffic impact analysis methodology follows the acceptable requirements of the agencies with jurisdiction over the roadways and intersections in the Project area (e.g., Caltrans, City of South Lake Tahoe, Nevada Department of Transportation). Section 3.7.4.1 describes the project's summer trip generation characteristics in detail. Table 3.7-14 presents the results of the detailed transportation operations analysis, and displays the summer traffic level of service and vehicle delay calculations with the project. As shown in the table, the Project will not create adverse impacts to vehicle delay at project area intersections and therefore, will not adversely impact the operation of existing transit services or existing transportation systems, including roadways and intersections.

To clarify the source of data used in the DEIR/EIS/EIS, the data provided in Appendix 3.7-A "Traffic Counts Data" is not Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) data, but is PM peak hour intersection turning movement data collected for the project area on December 13, 2013. The AADT data displayed in Table 3.7-2 is provided for historical context only and was obtained from the Caltrans Traffic Data Branch. This data was not collected just for this project. At the time that the DEIR/EIS/EIS transportation section was prepared, the most recent Caltrans AADT data available was from the year 2012. The Caltrans data does show that traffic on US 50 near the CA/NV state line has declined over the last 10 years. The decline is somewhat due to the "Great Recession (December 2007 – June 2009) but is also due to general decline in traffic for a combination of potential reasons, including increased California tribal gaming, expansion of the transit network, improved bicycle/pedestrian conditions, and the "new normal." Traffic volumes on this corridor began declining in 2004/2005, prior to the "Great Recession." Also, the traffic analysis was performed for the summer Friday peak hour, and there is less historical variability in the peak hour traffic. Caltrans Traffic Data Branch also provides data for the peak hour. Table MR-1 displays the 2003 and 2012 peak hour roadway volumes within the project area.

Table MR-1

Historic Peak Hour Traffic Volumes – US 50

Segment	2003	2012	Average Annual Growth
US 50 East of Pioneer Trail Road	3,250	2,600	-2.2%/year
US 50 East of Park Avenue	3,050	3,000	0%
US 50 West of Stateline Avenue	1,400	2,850	+11.5%/year

Sources: Caltrans Traffic Data Branch

2013 data is now available from Caltrans Traffic Data Branch. As shown in Table MR-2, the AADT for 2013 is the same as the data for 2012.

Table MR-2

Historic Average Daily Traffic Volumes – US 50

Segment	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
US 50 East of Pioneer Trail Road	37,500	37,500	NA	35,500	35,000	33,000	31,500	28,500	29,000	29,000	29,000
US 50 East of Park Avenue	34,000	33,500	NA	29,000	29,000	28,500	27,500	26,500	26,500	26,500	26,500
US 50 West of Stateline Avenue	33,000	33,000	NA	30,500	30,500	28,000	27,500	26,500	26,000	25,500	25,500
US 50 East of CA-NV Stateline	30,500	30,800	28,900	26,500	25,000	25,000	24,000	24,000	27,000	22,500	NA

Sources: Caltrans Traffic Data Branch, 2014

In regard to access for the Epic Discovery project activities, it will be provided at the existing Heavenly Village Gondola. The intersections selected for analysis in the DEIR/EIS/EIS are either adjacent to or in close proximity to the Heavenly Village Gondola. Although comments suggest that the traffic analysis focuses on the Ski Run/Main California base area, transportation conditions are not analyzed on Ski Run Boulevard or other intersections near the Main California Lodge Area because this base area will not be used by the public to access the proposed summer operations.

In regard to transit impacts and transit facilities, Impact TRANS-5 indicates that the project will not include any new transit facilities, and will not interfere with existing transit facilities or services. The project will not create impacts to vehicle delay at study intersections and therefore, will not adversely impact the operation or capacity of existing transit services. Visitor and employee trip generation calculations indicate that approximately 19 visitors and 6 employees will use transit to access the Heavenly Village Gondola area on a peak day. Twenty-five (25) new transit users per day can be accommodated within the existing BlueGo transit system.

In summary, there is no adverse traffic impacts identified that requires mitigation measures not already included in the Heavenly Mountain Resort Master Plan Mitigation Monitoring Program (DEIR/EIS/EIS Chapter 5).

7.3 RESPONSES TO FEDERAL, STATE, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL AGENCY COMMENTS

Nine letters were received from federal, state, regional and local agencies:

1. Sharit, Ben, Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, 10/7/14
2. Drozdoff, Leo, Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, 10/17/14
3. Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of State Parks, 10/17/14
4. Harrison, Elizabeth, Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of State Lands, 10/20/14
5. Bartlett, Tina, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 10/20/14
6. Port, Patricia, United States Department of the Interior, Pacific Southwest Region, 10/21/14
7. Thomaselli, Lauren, City of South Lake Tahoe, 10/23/14
8. Wright, Patrick, California Tahoe Conservancy, 10/27/14
9. Goforth, Kathleen, United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX, 10/28/14

Comment Letter 1 – Sharit, Ben, Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, 10/7/14

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Ben Sharit, Fire Chief
Mark Novak, Assistant Chief
Eric Guevin, Fire Marshal



Kevin Kjer, Chair
Larry Schussel, Vice Chair
Greg Felton, Trustee
Steve Seibel, Trustee
Ann Grant, Trustee

October 7, 2014

RECEIVED

OCT 10 2014

TAHOE REGIONAL
PLANNING AGENCY

TRPA
ATTN: Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project Comments
P.O. 5310
Stateline, NV 89449

To: David Landry, TRPA Senior Planner

Re: Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project EIS

1 The Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District (TDFPD) supports the proposed Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project (Heavenly). This project represents an opportunity for the Lake Tahoe Region to continue to expand recreational opportunities, to a wide range of visitors in an environmentally sensitive manner. Based upon our decade's long partnership with Heavenly, we are confident that this project will be implemented in a manner which benefits the local community, visitors and the environment.

The TDFPD particularly supports the project component that would allow increased snowcat access to the gondola. This proposal is critically necessary to provide for timely evacuation of the gondola.

2 The TDFPD submits the following comment:

Issue: The project area is in an location which can be threatened by wildfire; the gondola, which is the primary method of accessing the project area, may not be in operation for evacuation during a wildfire. Evacuation by motor vehicle is a plausible option, but may not have sufficient capacity to evacuate the proposed number of participants and employees at Epic Discovery in a timely fashion.

Recommendation: Fire modeling of the project area should be conducted to determine the size and location of safety zones for the public and employees. The EIS should analyze for the creation these zones including any impacts of establishing these zones.

Recommendation: The EIS should acknowledge that alternative evacuation methods and routes will be incorporated in the Annual Summer Operations Plan.

Recommendation: Section 3.1-62 and 2.3.5 of the EIS should address the importance of road management, design and maintenance in providing access for emergency responders

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- 2 | as well as providing adequate capacity to evacuate members of the public and employees during emergencies.
- 3 | **Issue:** Section 5.4 - Compliance with Existing Programs refers to the Uniform Building Code as the code of record in Douglas County. The currently adopted building code in Douglas County is the International Building Code.
Recommendation: Change reference to International Building Code and include reference to International Fire Code.
- 4 | **Issue:** Section 7.5-34 - Ensure Adequate Police/Sheriff/Fire Capacity. This section refers solely to the City of South Lake Tahoe Fire Department (CSLTFD) and Lake Valley Fire Protection District (LVFPD). The East Peak Basin area of the project is in the response area of the East Fork Fire Protection District (EFFPD). The Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District (TDFPD) provides initial response to this area under a Memorandum of Understanding with the EFFPD. The access roads to the East Peak Basin terminate within the boundaries of the TDFPD. Injured persons who require ambulance transport and cannot be transported on the gondola will be transported by the TDFPD. In most situations the TDFPD can access emergencies in the Gondola Basin more expediently than either the CSLTFD or LVFD).
Recommendation: Include TDFPD as providing first response to the East Peak Basin and potentially the Gondola Basin.
- 5 | **Issue:** The DEIS does not address the periodic need for evacuation of sick/injured persons by helicopter.
Recommendation: The EIS should address the need for pre-designated helicopter landing zones. These zones may require periodic tree removal for safety purposes.
- 6 | **Issue:** Several new hiking and mountain biking trails are proposed. Historically the TDFPD has experienced numerous instances where it has been difficult to locate injured hikers/bikers.
Recommendation: Provide signage at all trail junctions. Consider implementing a system of "rescue locator" signs spaced at intervals along all trails.

We applaud the thoroughness and careful analysis that the DEIS represents, we thank you for the consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



Ben Sharit
Fire Chief

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Comment 1-1 The commenter expresses support for the Project. This is not a comment on the content or adequacy of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. This information is passed on to the Project proponent and decision makers for consideration.

Comment 1-2 Heavenly Mountain Resort maintains and enforces a Fire Protection Plan. The Plan includes systems and procedures for wildfire protection, including the snow making water system, which supplies water through the existing snowmaking system in wildfire situations. These sprinkler lines provide a barrier against wildfires in addition to the summer irrigation plan. Snowmaking lines from California Dam are continually charged on Ridge Run, Maggies, Roundabout, Groove, Patsy's and to Lake View Lodge. On the Nevada side, the Nevada Pumphouse charges Pepi's, Crossover, Von Schmidt, the top of the Gondola area and under the length of Tamarack Chair. In addition, a two-inch fire hose is in place underneath the Gondola Lift line from the mid-station to tower 14 that can be connected to the snow making system and used to provide water to fire crews. Each of the summer operations trucks is equipped with a fire extinguisher, shovel, and fire response kit containing a snowmaking hose and nozzle. A 2000 gallon water truck used for dust abatement may be utilized as an additional water source.

Heavenly Security implements "Fire Watch" procedures during red flag warnings and when lightning is forecast. Heavenly uses "Weather Sentry" web based forecasting and real time lightning detection to monitor storm activity and employees are tasked with monitoring for hot spots or smoke after storms. If a lightning strike occurs, staff are required to report the incident to Heavenly Dispatch and if the strike area can be safely accessed, staff then investigate the area to determine if a fire has started. If the strike occurs in an inaccessible area, staff are required to monitor the area for smoke or other visible signs of fire. Staff are responsible for contacting the appropriate fire protection district for non-emergency reports or 911 if a fire event has occurred.

The Fire Protection Plan also includes a Hot Work Guide that establishes procedures to prevent fires resulting from temporary operations involving an open flame or that produce heat, sparks, or hot slag such as brazing, cutting, grinding, soldering, and welding, among others. Hot work is not permitted in non-designated areas on "Red Flag Warning" days and such work should regularly be moved to a safe location when possible. A Hot Work Permit is required prior to commencement of hot work outside of designated areas to ensure managers are aware of the work and associated risks and monitor the activity during the permitted work period. Hot Work Permits are not issued if a sprinkler protection is impaired, appropriate firefighting equipment is not readily available, combustible/flammable materials are within 35 feet and cannot be protected, floor and wall opening cannot be covered, cutting or welding can conduct enough heat to ignite combustibles, or any condition that could result in undue hazard.

All employees are trained on evacuation procedures. Mountain Operations staff and contractors are trained to use the snowmaking hydrants and fire hoses. No smoking is allowed. Staff is also required to conduct a weekly defensible space check to prevent wildfire spread. They must check for a reduced fuel zone within 100 feet of structures, lean, clean and green areas within 30 feet of structures, and noncombustible areas within 5 feet of structures.

Text has been added to the Project Description in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.5, Emergency Evacuation and Shelter in Place for Summer Operations, on page 2-35 indicating that the Summer Operating Plan will incorporate a section that designates “shelter in place” locations at Tamarack Lodge, East Peak Lodge, the Bear Cave Ski School Building, the top of the Gondola terminal, and Lakeview Lodge, all of which are in the Project Area. Each building can house a specified number of people, including employees, with adequate occupancy capacity to meet the anticipated number of peak visitors (2,000-2,500) plus employees (200) as shown in the following table.

Location	Estimated Emergency Occupant Capacity
Top of Gondola Area	
Tamarack Lodge & Deck	750
Bear Cave Ski School Building	200
Gondola Top Station	250
East Peak Patrol Building	50
Tamarack Meadow	1,000
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>2,250</i>
East Peak Area	
East Peak Lodge & Deck	650
East Peak Snowmaking Pumphouse	100
Dipper Patrol Building	75
Base of Comet & Dipper Express Lift Maze Area	1,000
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>1,825</i>
Sky Meadows/Upper California Area	
Sky Meadows Deck	350
Sky Meadows Reservoir Pumphouse	75
Top of Sky Patrol Building	50
Sky Meadows Restrooms	100
Face Patrol Building	75
Lakeview Lodge	400
Aerial Tram Top Station	25
Upper Vehicle Maintenance Shop & Concrete Work Pad	250
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>1,325</i>
Total	5,400

The Summer Operating Plan will also highlight the importance of maintaining the roadway system for emergency access. As the additional text under Emergency Evacuation and Shelter in Place for Summer Operations indicates, on mountain road management, design (where improvements are proposed), and maintenance procedures shall be implemented in a manner to provide access for emergency responders as well as adequate capacity to evacuate members of the public and employees during emergencies. The Summer Operating Plan will define the primary on mountain access roads to be used for emergency responders and evacuation and will include measures to ensure that those roadways remain open during summer operations for emergency access.

Additional text regarding roadway maintenance will not be added to Chapter 3.1 as suggested, as that chapter addresses hydrology and water quality impacts. Roadways were discussed on page 3.1-62 in regard to erosion impacts on water quality and not

erosion impacts on roadway maintenance and access. The additional text in Section 2.3.5 addresses this concern.

Heavenly Mountain Resort maintains an Emergency Response Plan that includes detailed procedures for different emergency scenarios including wildfire and severe weather events. During such events emergency dispatch is immediately notified and staff are directed to follow protocol regarding communications, notifications, aid, and security. During an event, guests and staff are evacuated by vehicle to the emergency “Staging Areas” as appropriate or safe. Severe weather procedures are activated at the first report of severe weather or lightning within 60 miles. Vehicles will be sent out onto the trails to announce impending threats and visitors may be assisted out of the area. Facilities remain closed until the threat has passed.

The following text will be added to the Emergency Response Plan and Summer Operating Plan:

1. Re-confirm that the protection of life and public safety are the highest priorities;
2. Re-confirm that maintaining the summer road system as an evacuation route will continue to be a priority in terms of minimizing road closures and coordinating road maintenance activities during summer public operations;
3. In the event that off-mountain evacuation using the gondola is not possible, designate the four on-mountain lodges as shelter in place locations: all four lodges are fire sprinklered;
4. Further designate the cleared areas around each lodge as safety zones that will be protected as needed by using the snowmaking system; designate and sign cleared safety areas at the far ends of hiking trails along with designated cleared landing zones.
5. Set up and test the snowmaking system each season for effectiveness and inspect with applicable fire districts; and
6. Investigate the option of using key lifts for downloading to quickly move people to lower mountain areas where they could be evacuated by larger-capacity vehicles.

The Forest Service defines a safety zone as an area where a firefighter can survive without a fire shelter. The size and location of safety zones are determined by wildland fire personnel during an incident and is not something that can be modeled. Since Heavenly Mountain Resort will establish “shelter in place” locations within the Project Area, will maintain fire safety procedures, will add roadway maintenance and evacuation practices to the Summer Operations Plan, and has multiple snowmaking system sprinkler points within the Project Area that can be used to suppress wildfire, additional wildfire modeling is not required to identify other areas more suited as safety zones within the Project Area. The “shelter in place” locations are in relatively open areas within existing forest clearings, are existing structures equipped with fire suppression devices, and are near snowmaking system sprinklers, making them the most feasible safety zones.

Comment 1-3

The reference to the Uniform Building Code in Chapter 5, Section 5.4, page 5-9 under Douglas County has been changed to International Building Code, which is the

currently adopted building code in Douglas County. Reference to the International Fire Code has also been added.

Comment 1-4

This mitigation measure has been removed as it duplicates existing requirements regarding emergency response. Although Operations Mitigation Measure 7.5-34 states the Lake Valley Fire Protection District would provide first response for the California operations, it is currently understood and established that the Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District is the first responder for events within the Nevada portion of Heavenly Mountain Resort per the existing Fire Protection Plan currently implemented. Since the response boundaries are already established and enforced it is unnecessary and redundant to include Operations Mitigation Measure 7.5-34 in the DEIR/EIS/EIS.

Comment 1-5

The Heavenly Mountain Resort 2013/2014 Operations and Avalanche Control Plan includes helicopter evacuation and access procedures. The procedures state that emergency landing zones shall be barricaded and signed to prevent unauthorized access by personnel. The procedures also establish the following emergency helicopter landing zones, of which those in the Project Area are shown in italics and some of which are depicted in Sheet 1 and Sheet 2:

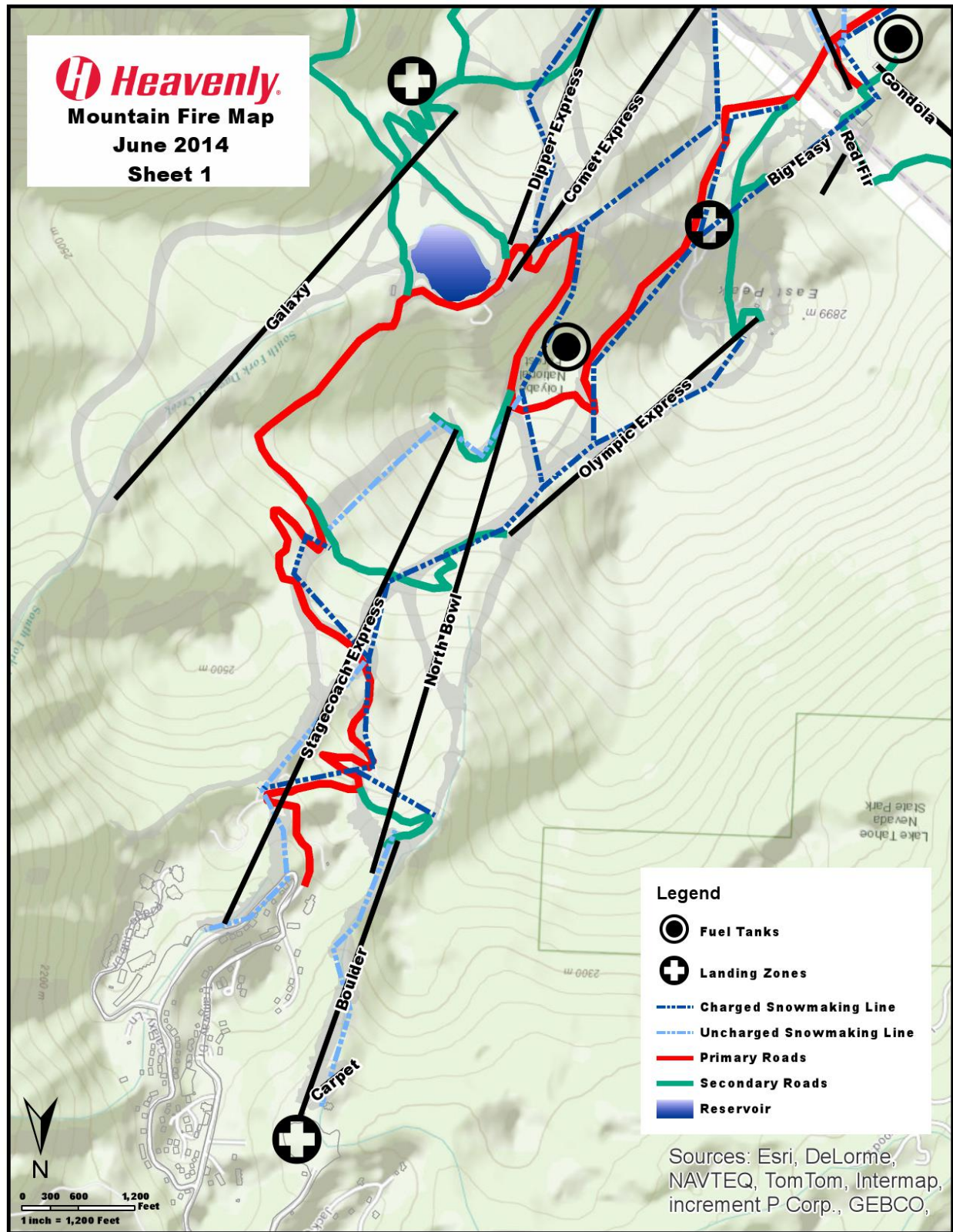
H-1 – California Base Area	H-9 – Killebrew Canyon (Bottom)
<i>H-2 – Base of Sky Chair</i>	H-10 – Stagecoach (Base)
H-3 – California Creek	H-11 – Boulder Base Area
<i>H-4 – Top of Gondola</i>	<i>H-12 – Galaxy (Top)/Dam Road</i>
<i>H-5 – Milky Way (Bottom)</i>	<i>H-13 – Comet and Steve’s Road</i>
H-6 – Olympic Below Nevada Trail	<i>(summer only)</i>
H-7 – Galaxy (Base)	<i>H-14 – Lower Orion’s (summer only)</i>
<i>H-8 – Mott Canyon (Bottom)</i>	<i>H-15 – Top of Red Fir Lift</i>

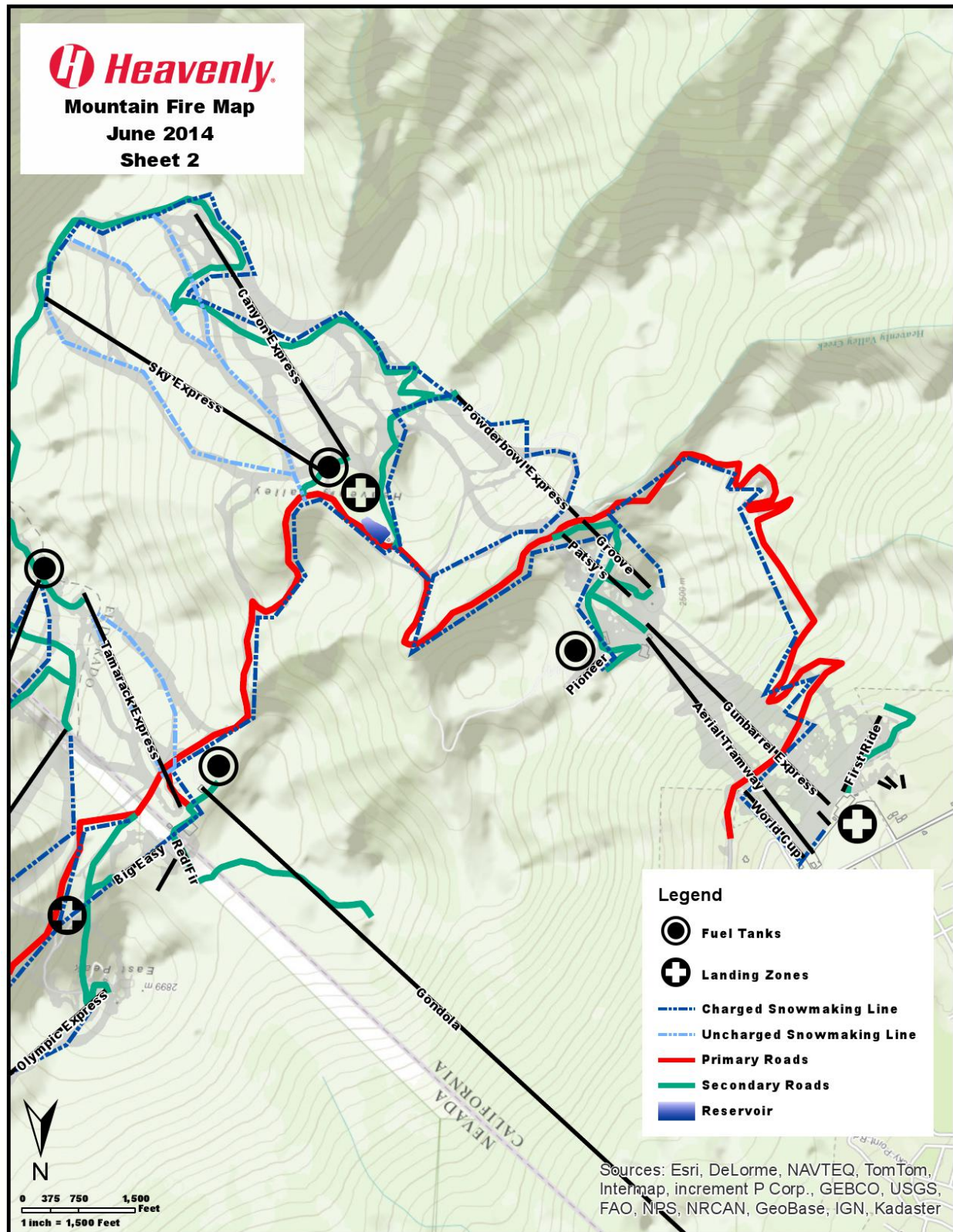
The procedures further state that emergency helicopter landing may occur in areas other than those listed during a life-threatening emergency as long as adequate personnel are present to provide crowd control. These procedures and operations are already in effect and are maintained annually, therefore the DEIR/EIS/EIS does not address helicopter access. Additional tree removal is not anticipated as helicopter landing zones are already established and are maintained per Heavenly’s Emergency Response Plan.

Comment 1-6

The comment requests the addition of trail signage at trail junctions and at intervals along the trails to provide emergency responders with more accurate response location data. The following text has been added to Chapter 2, Connecting Trails on page 2-26 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS regarding locational and directional signage:

As part of the connecting trail implementation, locational/directional signage will be incorporated at trail intersections and spaced at intervals along the proposed trails to provide users with a way to provide emergency responders with their location in emergency situations.





**Comment Letter 2 – Drozdoff, Leo, Nevada Department of Conservation and
Natural Resources, 10/17/14**

LEO M. DROZDOFF, P.E.
Director

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Deputy Director

Division of Environmental Protection
Division of Forestry
Division of State Lands
Division of State Parks
Division of Water Resources
Conservation Districts Program
Natural Heritage Program
State Historic Preservation Office

**STATE OF NEVADA
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources**

October 17, 2014

David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
128 Market Street
Stateline, NV 89449

Re: Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project

Dear Mr. Landry:

1 The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above reference project. We appreciate the time Heavenly and United States Forest Service (USFS) representatives have made to review the different elements of the Heavenly proposal and in particular the alignment of the Panorama Trail portion of the project. This includes the additional trail alternative analysis provided to the Department from the applicant yesterday morning.

After internal review and careful consideration by several of my agency administrators, the Department supports the Epic Discovery Center project and the concept of the Panorama Trail with associated appropriate mitigation provided the Panorama Trail connects to the existing Tahoe Rim Trail Connector Trail easterly of the township line between Township 13 North, Range 18 East and Township 13 North, Range 19 East. The township line serves as the easterly boundary of the Van Sickle State Park as depicted in yellow (NE1/4SE1/4 of Section 25 of Township 13 North Range 18 East) on the attached map.

Specific comments regarding other elements of the project and proposed mitigation efforts are being submitted by the Division of State Parks and the Tahoe Resource Team under separate cover.

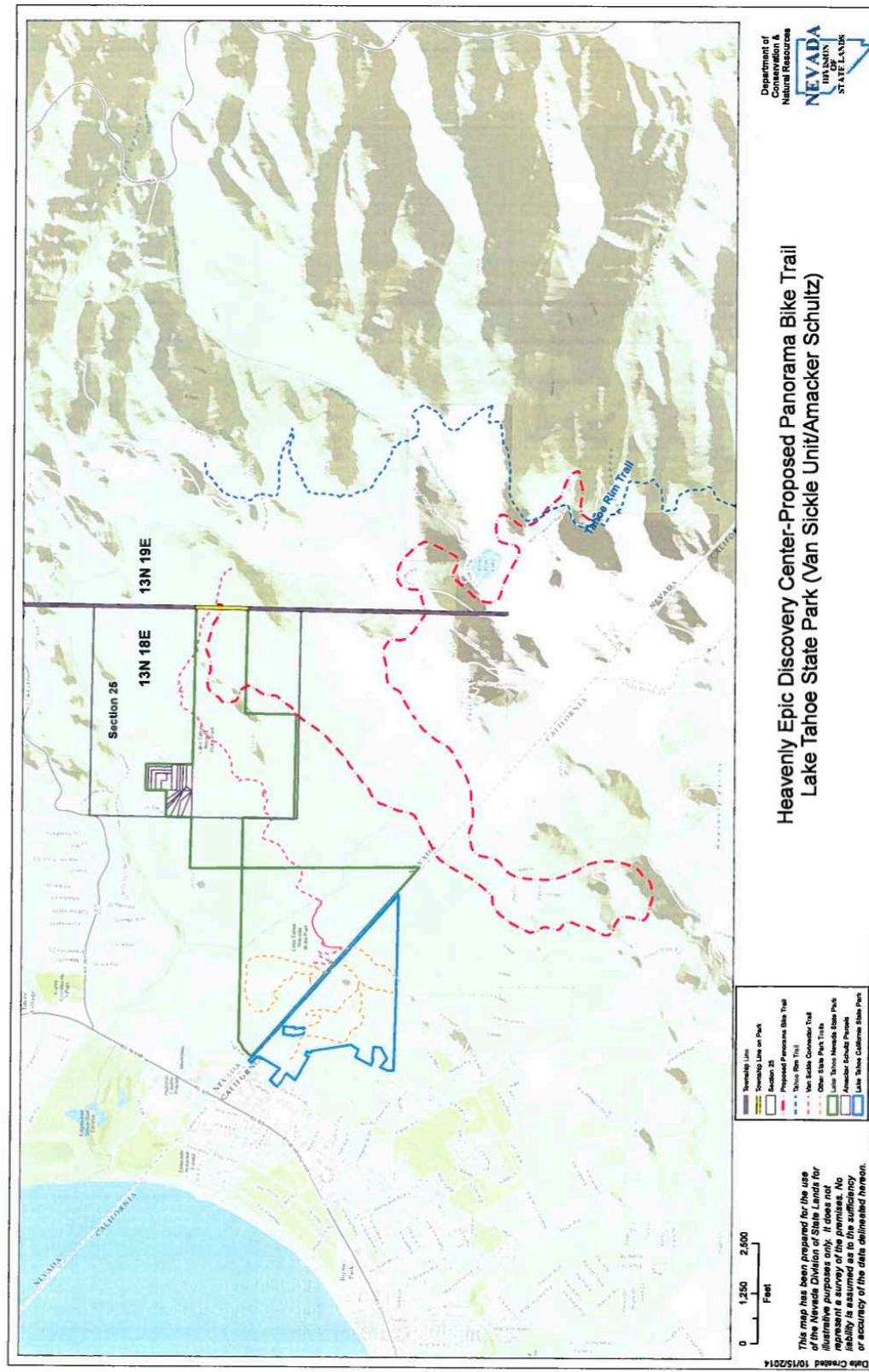
If you have any concerns or require additional information please do not hesitate to contact our Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Leo Drozdoff", followed by the text "Deputy Director for" in a smaller, less legible script.

Leo Drozdoff, P.E.
Director

cc: Andrew Strain, Heavenly Mountain
Nancy Gibson, Forest Supervisor, LTBMU



Comment 2-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation. Further response to the detailed comments provided by the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources can be found in the responses to comment letters 3 and 4.

**Comment Letter 3 – Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources,
Division of State Parks, 10/17/14**

LEO M. DROZDOFF, P.E.
Director
Department of Conservation and
Natural Resources

ERIC M. JOHNSON
Administrator

BRIAN SANDOVAL
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF STATE PARKS

October 17, 2014

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David Landry, TRTA Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional planning Agency
P.O. Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449-5310

Dear Mr. Landry;

- 1 | The Nevada Division of State Parks appreciates the opportunity to comment on the DEIR for the Heavenly Mountain Epic Discovery Park. Nevada State Parks supports the concept of a summer use facility on the USFS system property described in the report, however; the proximity and connection to portions of the proposed project will impact current trails and current use at Van Sickle Bi-State Park.

Our management partners, the NV Tahoe Resource Team, the Tahoe Rim Trail Association, and the California Tahoe Conservancy will be providing comments under separate letter.

Draft Comments – Epic Discovery EIR/EIS/EIS
From Nevada Division of State Parks

Executive Summary

- 2 | Page 2, Summary of Alternatives to be considered
Unlike many environmental reports or statements, only one trail option was proposed.
- Were alternatives for either: 1) no Panorama Trail; or 2) a contained loop system (no connection to town) considered? If not, NDSP/NDSL would like to see these as possible alternatives.
- 3 | Page 12, 3.7, Trans 3
- If this is a publicly accessible, bi-directional trail, what are impacts to trailhead parking within VSBSP?
- 4 | Page 17, 3.13, Rec 2
- Project may degrade the quality of the existing Tahoe Rim Trail Connector experience by changing the nature of the use from a passive, low-impact, bi-directional route to one which is lift assisted - with a use focused on downhill access, at volumes that exceed trail design and intent. Does the proposed project and/or mitigation plan include maintenance/other operational needs on affected properties that are not within Heavenly's SUP?
- 5 | Page 17, 3.13, Rec 3
- Project will potentially conflict with the established recreational use on the Tahoe Rim Trail Connector by changing the nature of the use from a passive, low-impact, bi-directional route to one which is lift assisted - with a use focused on downhill access, at volumes that exceed trail design and intent. Does the proposed project and/or mitigation plan include maintenance/other operational needs on affected properties that are not within Heavenly's SUP?

- 6 | Page 17, 3.13, Rec 4
- Project will likely result in the need for increased maintenance and/or expansion of existing facilities within Van Sickle. Does the proposed project and/or mitigation plan include maintenance/other operational needs on affected properties that are not within Heavenly's SUP?
- Chapter 1**
- 7 | Page 1-2
- Map is incorrect. SUP Boundary encompasses lands owned by the State of Nevada and State of California. This map needs to be revised to accurately depict the SUP boundary.
- 8 | Page 1-4, 1st paragraph: "During the summer it attracts tens of thousands of people."
- This volume may translate into significant impact when proposing a direct connection to the park?
- 9 | Page 1-6/1-7
- Where is the discussion of recreational impacts to Van Sickle Bi-State Park? Discussion needs to be added.
- Chapter 2**
- 10 | Page 2-3
- Map should be revised to illustrate the entirety of the proposed Panorama Trail.
- 11 | Page 2-32
- The language in this section lacks specificity in identifying mitigation for impacts that may occur within VSBSP based on similar use patterns that have been identified elsewhere in the Reno/Tahoe region. As they pertain to impacts to VSBSP, mitigation options need to be identified, evaluated and incorporated into the final project design, with the approval of NDSP and its California partner.
- 12 | Page 2-37
- Were alternatives for either: 1) no Panorama Trail; or 2) a contained loop system (no connection to town) considered?
- 13 | Page 2-61, Trans 3
- Has visitor parking demand generated within the park to access the trail uphill (as has been indicated by HSR/USFS staff as a planned use) been considered?
- 14 | Page 2-73, Rec-1
- See comments Page 17 3.13 Rec 2, 3.13 Rec 3.
- 15 | Page 2-73, Rec-1: "Additional use of the TRT/VST resulting from the...connector trails would be consistent with the intended use and management of these trails and is not anticipated to degrade the recreational experience."
- A lift assisted, downhill linkage to the village is not consistent with the current use and management of the Tahoe Rim Trail Connector and may degrade the quality of the existing experience for Park users.

16 Page 2-74, Rec-2

- See page 2-73 Rec-1

17 Page 2-74, Rec-3

- See page 2-73 Rec-1

Chapter 3.7 Transportation

18 Page 3.7-11

- What about VS Trailhead parking? If the proposed Panorama Trail is a bi-directional publicly accessible trail, with uphill access to the trail desired by users, it must be assumed that users will drive to the trailhead. Impact needs evaluation.

19 Page 3.7-19, Trans 3

- See Page 2-61 Trans 3/3.7-11

Chapter 3.12 Land Use

20 Page 3.12-10, second paragraph

- If Panorama Trail will provide access to HMR through existing VSBSP trails, what is the impact on VSBSP parking?

21 Page 3.12-12, first paragraph: "Heavenly...attracts more than 100,000 visitors each summer... The purpose of this proposal is to engage a larger segment of summer visitors..."

- Regardless of chosen route, numbers of this magnitude will likely mean a portion of those visitors will have a downstream impact to VSBSP via the proposed Panorama Trail, which provides a direct connection to Van Sickle Bi-State Park. The proposed project/mitigation plan needs to recognize and identify maintenance, and/or additional facilities/staffing that will be required within VSBSP should the project's projected visitation be met or exceeded.

22 Page 3.12-13, first paragraph: "...clarifying the authority the FS has regarding recreational uses within ski area special use permits. The proposed projects have been determined to be consistent with SAROE..."

- VSBSP is NOT within the SUP boundary. The proposed use and potential traffic on the Panorama Trail is not consistent with the original, intended use of Van Sickle. Mitigation may be necessary to accommodate the current, short-term, passive recreation activities.

Chapter 3.13 Recreation

23 Page 3.13-4, last paragraph: "Hiking and mountain biking trails on surrounding NFS lands can be accessed through Heavenly's SUP area (refer to the Recreation Context Figure 3.13-1, below)."

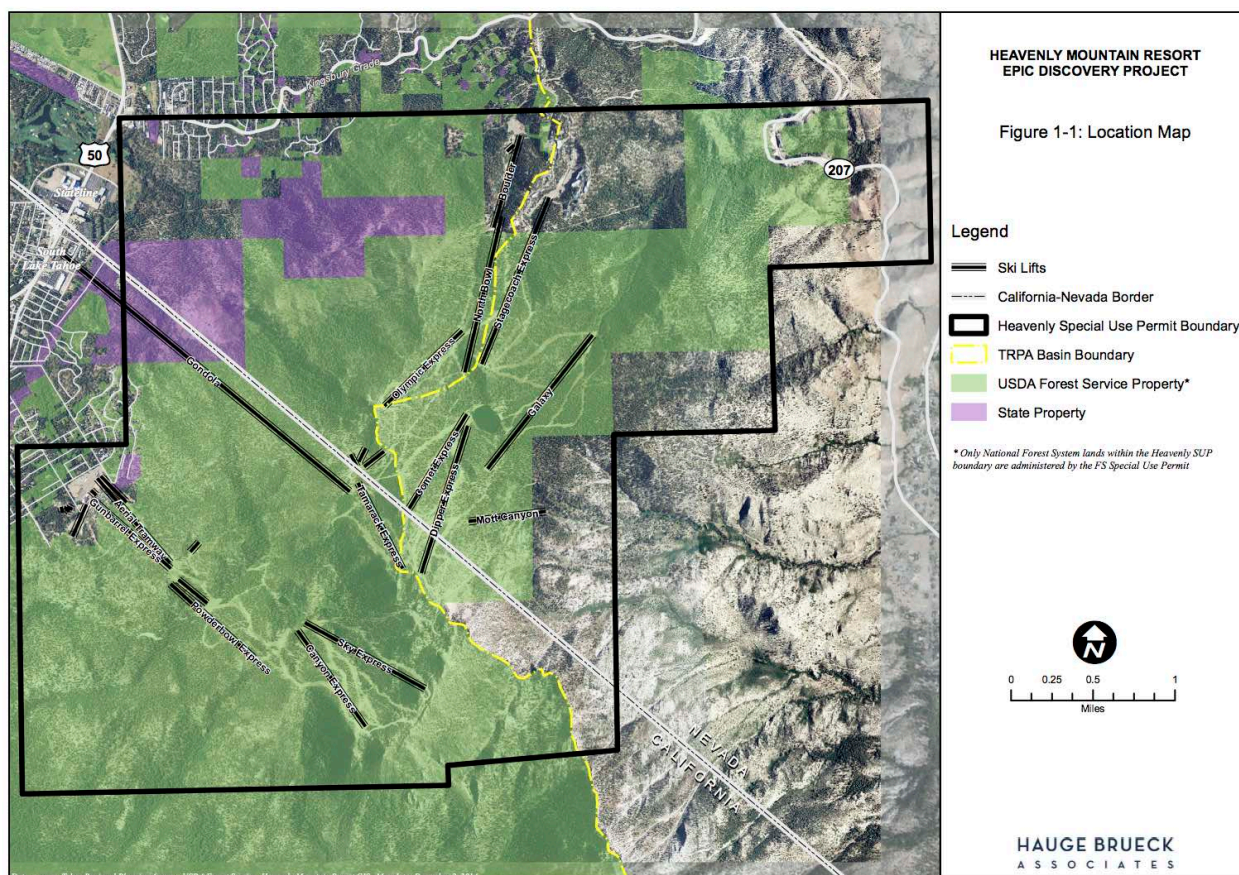
- e • The SUP boundary depicted in the referenced figure incorporates Van Sickle Bi-State Park (both Nevada and California properties). This is incorrect and gives a false impression to the public about access from
x lands to which Heavenly is contracted by the USFS. This issue was brought to light during the Douglas County Master Plan Update process, but was not addressed. This boundary needs to be revised to accurately depict the lands incorporated within the SUP.

- 24 | Page 3.13-7, second paragraph: "...the Van Sickle Connector Trail and Tahoe Rim Trail traverse Heavenly's SUP."
- This is an accurate statement – but not to the extent depicted in Figure 13.3-1. The SUP boundary depicted in the referenced figure incorporates the Van Sickle Bi-State Park (both Nevada and California properties). This is incorrect and gives a false impression to the public about access from lands to which Heavenly is contracted by the USFS. This boundary needs to be revised to accurately depict the lands incorporated within the SUP.
- 25 | Page 13.3-9, Figure 13.3-1: Recreation Context
- SUP boundary is incorrect and needs to be revised to accurately depict the lands incorporated within the SUP (see comments, above).
- 26 | Page 13.13-14, last paragraph
- This paragraph states HMR summer use over the past six seasons was 109,000, with the proposed project expected to increase annual summer visitation by 50,000 users annually, based on Table 3.13-4. This is in comparison to 900,000 skiers annually. See comments Page 3.13-26.
- 27 | Page 3.13-25, first paragraph: "The recreational experience of these trails would be similar to that on hiking and mountain biking trails throughout NFS lands."
- This may be an inaccurate supposition, as NFS trails generally do not have lift assisted access.
- 28 | Page 3.13-26, fourth paragraph: "With full build out of the proposed activities, the proposed action is anticipated to result in approximately 50,000 new summer visitors to HMR."
- This number may be low as this projection is based solely on existing Gondola use. Are figures available that are based the potential increases created by the improvements and number of additional activities that will be available to visitors?
- 29 |
- Will the Panorama Trail be subject to capacity limits similar to other proposed activities? Will adjacent impacted properties/facilities have a role in determining these capacity limits?
- 30 | Page 3.13-27, third paragraph: "This trail (Panorama) would provide an additional access point to the Tahoe Rim Trail and the network of mountain trails surrounding Heavenly's SUP and would create lift access and numerous loop opportunities, thereby increasing use of existing recreational resources." and "As a central access point...the improvement of trail resources at HMR would likely have a positive impact on recreation in the area so long as monitoring, maintenance and operations adjust to the additional use."
- Once these trails are open to this type of access/use, it will be very difficult to change that access/use pattern, permissible or otherwise. As they pertain to impacts to VSBSP, mitigation options need to be identified, evaluated and incorporated into the final project design, with the approval of NDSP and its California partner.
- 31 | Page 3.13-4, last paragraph: "This trail (Panorama) would provide an additional access point to the Tahoe Rim Trail and the network of mountain trails surrounding Heavenly's SUP and would create lift access and numerous loop opportunities, thereby increasing use of existing recreational resources." and "As a central access point...the improvement of trail resources at HMR would likely have a positive impact on recreation in this area so long as monitoring, maintenance and operations adjust to the additional use."
- Creating lift access, and then stating that monitoring, maintenance and operations need to adjust to any negative impacts may not be a sound approach. Once these trails are opened to this type of use, it will be very difficult to change that expectation.

- 32 | Page 3.13-28, first paragraph: "a large volume of local use is anticipated" and "The greatest increase is anticipated on the proposed Panorama Trail and existing Van Sickle Connector Trail. This is the most direct route from the top of the Gondola to the base of the Gondola and nearly entirely downhill."
- Once these trails are opened to this type of use, it will be very difficult to change and/or mitigate public expectation of the ability to access the village.
 - The existing Tahoe Rim Connector Trail was never intended to accommodate the volume of users and impacts potentially generated by lift-assisted mountain bike use, which would result from the proposed project.
- 33 | Page 3.13-28, third paragraph: "Increased use of the Van Sickle Connector Trail is anticipated as many intermediate to advanced riders in the proposed mountain bike park would likely choose to ride down to Heavenly Village via this trail rather than downloading in the Gondola." and "Lift access to the top of the Van Sickle Connector could also attract downhill mountain bikers"
- Once these trails are opened to this type of use, it will be very difficult to change and/or mitigate public expectation of the ability to access the village/use the Tahoe Rim Connector as a downhill trail.
 - The existing Tahoe Rim Connector was not intended to accommodate the volume of users and impacts potentially generated by lift-assisted mountain bike use, which would result from the proposed project.
- 34 | Page 3.13-29, first paragraph: "...any additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail and/or the Van Sickle Connector Trail resulting from the proposed project would be operated consistent with the intended use and management of these trails."
- The existing Tahoe Rim Trail Connector was not intended to accommodate the volume of users and impacts potentially generated by lift-assisted mountain bike use, which would result from the proposed project.
- 35 | Page 3.13-31: "The proposed mountain bike park and connector trails could result in additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail and Van Sickle Connector."
- Revise language to "will likely result in additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail and TRT Connector"; "could" does not represent the potential for impact on this section of trail.
- 36 | Page 3.13-31: "Any additional use...would be consistent with the intended use and management of these trails and is not anticipated to degrade the recreational experience."
- The existing Tahoe Rim Trail Connector was never intended to accommodate the volume of users and impacts potentially generated by lift-assisted mountain bike use, which would result from the proposed project.
- 37 | Page 3.13-32, Impact section
- This section, (third paragraph in section) does not adequately outline the potential impacts from the proposed connection of the Panorama Trail to the Tahoe Rim Trail Connector.
- 38 | Page 3.13-32, CEQA section: "The mountain bike park and connector trails, included in all action alternatives, could result in additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail and Van Sickle Connector..."
- Revise language to "will likely result in additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail Connector"; "could" does not represent the potential for impact on this section of trail.
- 39 | Page 3.13-33, NEPA Analysis section: "The mountain bike park and connector trails, included in all action alternatives, could result in additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail and Van Sickle Connector..."

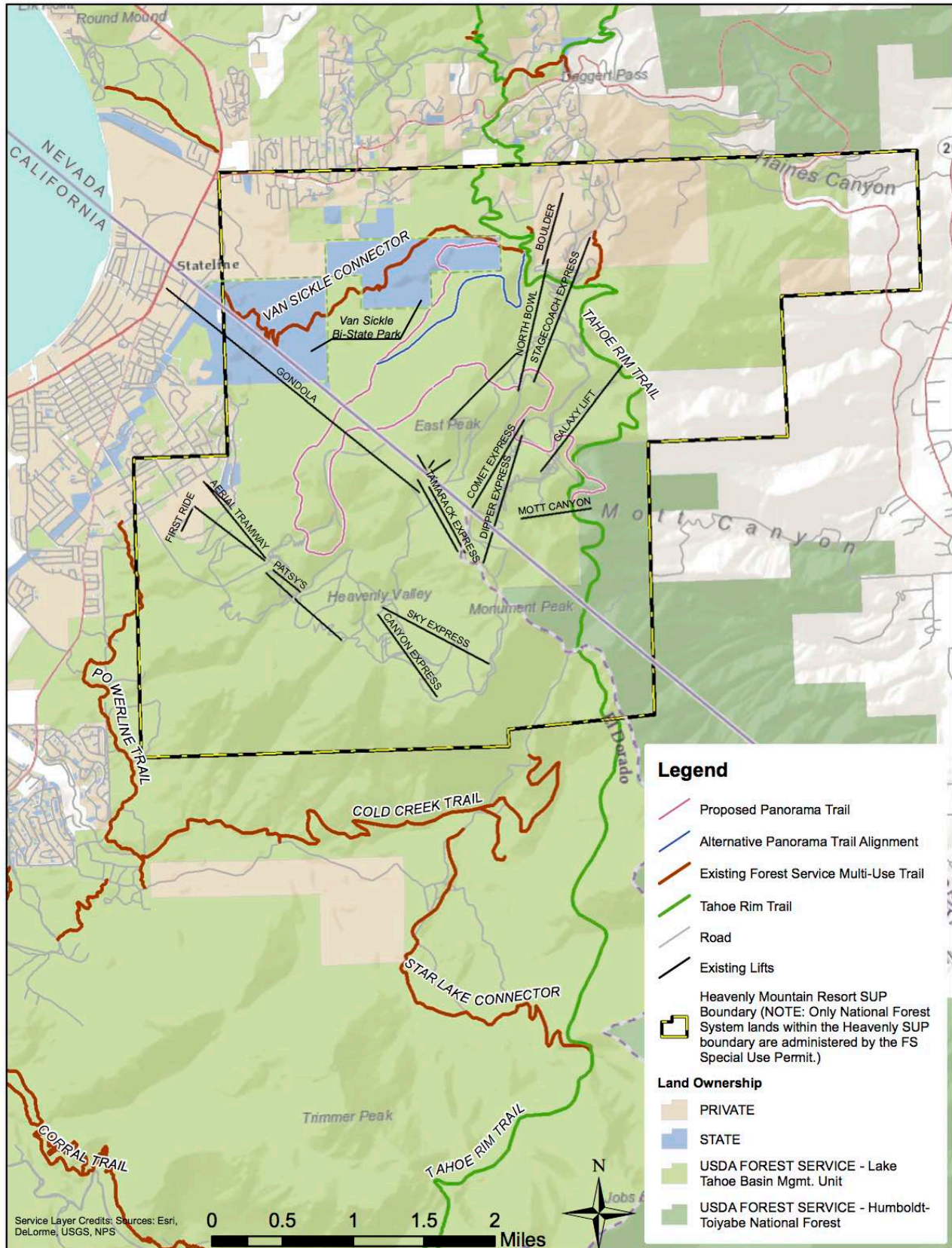
- 39
- Revise language to "will likely result in additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail Connector"; "could" does not represent the potential for impact on this section of trail.
- 40
- Page 3.13-33, NEPA Analysis section: "However, any additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail and/or Van Sickle Connector Trail resulting from the proposed projects would be consistent the intended use and management of these trails and is not anticipated to degrade the recreational experience."
- The existing Tahoe Rim Trail Connector was not intended to accommodate the volume of users and impacts potentially generated by lift-assisted mountain bike use, which would result from the proposed project.
 - Based on the above comments, there may be adverse effects.
- 41
- Page 3.13-35, CEQA/TRPA Analysis: "The mountain bike park and connector trails, included in all action alternatives, could result in additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail and Van Sickle Connector trail in the vicinity of HMR."
- Revise language to "will likely result in additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail Connector"; "could" does not represent the potential for impact on this section of trail.
- 42
- Page 3.13-35, CEQA/TRPA Analysis: "However, any additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail and/or Van Sickle Connector Trail resulting from the proposed projects would be consistent the intended use and management of these trails and is not anticipated to degrade the recreational experience."
- The existing Tahoe Rim Trail Connector Trail was not intended to accommodate the volume of users and impacts potentially generated by lift-assisted mountain bike use, which would result from the proposed project.
- 43
- Page 3.13-35, CEQA/TRPA Analysis: "Additionally, the recreational experience on these trails would be monitored and if a reduction in the quality of the experience or degradation of the facility were observed, improvements would be required."
- As they pertain to impacts to VSBSP, mitigation options need to be identified, evaluated and incorporated into the final project design, with the approval of NDSP and its California partner.
- 44
- Page 3.13-35: "The MP 96 Final EIR/EIS/EIS and MPA 07 Final EIR/EIS/EIS did not identify the needs for new parks or recreational facilities as a result of the MP build-out. Therefore new or expanded park facilities would not be required to serve new direct or indirect population growth for the proposed action of action alternatives."
- Construction of the proposed Panorama Trail will have an effect on the facilities at Van Sickle Bi-State Park, including restrooms and day use facilities and, potentially, parking. Therefore, NDSP and its California partner anticipate that new or expanded facilities will be required to serve the expanded use within the park that will occur as a direct result of the proposed project. This need, however, may or may not be related to population growth.

- Comment 3-1 Thank you for taking the time to review our project. Please refer to the following detailed responses to the specific comments included in your letter regarding impacts to existing trails and Van Sickle Bi-State Park.
- Comment 3-2 Chapter 2, Section 2.5, page 2-41 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS provides a discussion of the alternatives considered but eliminated from detailed study. Alternatives considered but eliminated include: No Mountain Coaster, Construction of Two Mountain Coasters, Panorama Trail within Maggie's SEZ, Panorama Trail Connection to Heavenly California Base, Mountain Bike Park in the Sky Meadows Basin Watershed, and Mountain Bike Park Access using Dipper Lift instead of Comet Lift.
- The Panorama Trail Connection to Heavenly California Base would have provided a connection to the California base area instead of the Van Sickle Bi-State Park. This alternative was eliminated because: the Epic Discovery project doesn't preclude a California base area connection as a future option; biological surveys have not included this route; the connector would not mitigate an impact of the project; and a trail user can currently access the California base using existing bike facilities located in town.
- Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-3 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-4 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-5 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-6 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-7 DEIR/EIS/EIS Figure 1-1 has been revised and includes the following note in the legend, "Only National Forest System lands within the Heavenly SUP boundary are administered by the Forest Service Special Use Permit." While the boundary for Heavenly's SUP was not changed on Figure 1-1, property ownership is more clearly labeled in color to better illustrate the location of Forest Service property and State property. The figure also more clearly shows the TRPA basin boundary and Heavenly's ski lifts. With improved clarity provided in Figure 1-1 (see figure below) and the addition of the note regarding National Forest System lands and the Special Use Permit, the map accurately depicts the boundary while clarifying the applicability of the SUP.



- Comment 3-8 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-9 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-10 DEIR/EIS/EIS Figure 2-1 is unable to show the entirety of the Panorama Trail while also showing each of the proposed activities within Adventure Peak, East Peak Reservoir Basin, and Sky Meadows Basin. If the map were enlarged to accommodate the extent of the Panorama Trail, the other proposed activities would become unreadable. Figure 2-5 depicts the Panorama Trail in its entirety and has been revised to show the location of the Alternative Panorama Trail Alignment located southeast of the proposed alignment near the Van Sickel Trail. Refer to Figure 2-5 (see Master Response 1), which provides a clear illustration of the entire extent of the Panorama Trail as well as the Alternative Panorama Trail Alignment.
- Comment 3-11 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-12 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-13 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-14 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-15 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.

- Comment 3-16 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-17 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-18 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-19 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-20 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-21 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-22 Only National Forest System lands within the Heavenly SUP boundary are administered by the Forest Service Special Use Permit. The Panorama multi-use trail partnership commitment provides further detail on management and monitoring methods which would protect the recreational experience on the Van Sickle Connector Trail. The reader is referred to Section 2.3.5 of the revised DEIR/EIS/EIS for additional information.
- Comment 3-23 DEIR/EIS/EIS Figure 3.13-1 (see below) has been revised and includes the following statement, “Only National Forest System lands within the Heavenly SUP boundary are administered by the Forest Service Special Use Permit” to clarify that not all land shown within the SUP boundary is subject to the permit. Other changes to Figure 3.13-1 include the addition of lines demarcating the Proposed Panorama Trail, Alternative Panorama Trail Alignment, and existing lifts. Figure 3.13-1 also uses color-coding to illustrate the following land ownership categories: Private, State, USDA Forest Service – Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, and USDA Forest Service – Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. These changes and clarifications clearly delineate which lands are subject to the SUP with the Heavenly Mountain Resort SUP boundary while depicting the location of existing and proposed trails in relation to one another.
- Comment 3-24 Refer to response to comment 3-23 regarding the SUP boundary in Figure 3.13-1.
- Comment 3-25 Refer to response to comment 3-23 regarding the SUP boundary in Figure 3.13-1.
- Comment 3-26 Refer to the response to comment 3-28.
- Comment 3-27 The referenced discussion on DEIR/EIS/EIS page 3.13-25 relates to the recreation experience on the East Peak Lodge hiking trail and the Panorama Trail. These trails would be constructed to modern design standards—accommodating both hikers and bikers with proper widths and drainage to ensure a quality and sustainable recreational experience. While these trails would be accessible from lifts at Heavenly, this would not impact the nature of the recreational experience on these trails. The experience on these trails would be similar to trails on NFS lands in relatively well-used areas. That is, users could expect to encounter man-made infrastructure and other users, but users would explore the area under their own power and at their own pace.



- Comment 3-28 Visitation estimates associated with Heavenly's summer activities take into account the capacities of individual activities (existing and proposed) as well as historic/anticipated use of Heavenly's SUP area as summer and multi-season activities at ski areas become more popular.
- Comment 3-29 The proposal does not include capacity limits for the Panorama Trail. The capacity limits of many other proposed activities are based on operational and manufacturer limitations. Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-30 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-31 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-32 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-33 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-34 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-35 The text of DEIR/EIS/EIS Chapter 3.13 (Recreation) has been revised to reflect that increased visitation to Heavenly Mountain Resort resulting from the proposed projects *would* likely result in some additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail and Van Sickle Connector Trail. Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-36 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-37 By design, the proposed multi-use Panorama Trail would establish a link between the ski area, Heavenly Village and surrounding public lands—including the Tahoe Rim Trail. Impacts of the proposed connection between the Panorama Trail and Tahoe Rim Trail are discussed in the DEIS and FEIS under "Adjacent and Connecting National Forest System Lands" (DEIR/EIS/EIS, p. 3.13-27).
- Comment 3-38 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-39 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-40 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-41 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-42 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-43 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 3-44 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.

**Comment Letter 4 – Harrison, Elizabeth, Nevada Department of Conservation and
Natural Resources, Division of State Lands, 10/20/14**

LEO DROZDOFF
Director

Department of Conservation
and Natural Resources

CHARLES DONOHUE
Administrator

BRIAN SANDOVAL
Governor



State Land Office
State Land Use Planning Agency
Nevada Tahoe Resource Team
Conservation Bond Program -Q1

Address Reply to

Division of State Lands
901 S. Stewart St. Suite 5003
Carson City, Nevada 89701-5246
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Web www.lands.nv.gov

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of State Lands

October 20, 2014

Heavenly Epic Discovery Project
Attention: David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
P.O. Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449

RE: NEVADA STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NOTICE E2015-032, DEIS-HEAVENLY EPIC
DISCOVERY PROJECT

Dear Mr. Landry,

The Nevada Tahoe Resource Team, which is comprised of individuals from the Division of State Lands, the Department of Wildlife, the Division of Forestry and the Division of State Parks are herein providing comments in response to the above referenced notice of the DEIS- Heavenly Epic Discovery Project. Please note that additional comments specific to the project's potential impact to the Van Sickle Bi-State Park, which is jointly managed by the Nevada Division of State Parks and the California Tahoe Conservancy, are being provided under a separate letter.

- 1 | 1. Page 3.9-6
Pallid bat and fringed myotis have both been recently detected in the east Tahoe Basin, between elevations 7,000 – 7,600 ft, north of Spooner Summit. Therefore, suitable habitat for those species could occur within the project boundary, and the species could be present during project implementation. Since these species are especially sensitive to human presence, measures should be taken to avoid roost sites, especially maternity roosts, whenever possible. Acoustic surveys should be conducted around project activity sites to determine whether roost sites exist in the area. If active roost sites are found, efforts should be made to direct human activity at least 100 ft. away from roost sites to avoid impacts to pallid bats and fringed myotis.
- 2 | 2. Page 3.9-14
Blue grouse have recently been observed within Heavenly's operations area, in the Edgewood Creek drainage. This was one mile from the project boundary, near the water storage tanks past the end of Tramway Dr. Therefore, the species could be present within the project boundary during project implementation. To avoid impacting this species, riparian vegetation

should be disturbed as little as possible, and surveys conducted under mitigation measure BIO-3 on page 3.9-44 should include this species.

- 3 | 3. Page 3.9-19
Bald eagles have nested along the Carson River for years, on TNC property at River Fork Ranch. This is an active and successful nest that is only 5 miles from the project boundary. Therefore, the potential exists for East Peak Lake to be used as a foraging area for bald eagles. If bald eagles are observed using the area as a roost site or feeding area, mitigation measures to avoid impacts should include protecting large diameter trees, limiting development near the shore, and even reducing boating activities on East Peak Lake. Typically, buffer zones are recommended for important eagle foraging areas.
- 4 | 4. Page 3.9-20
Many of the structures proposed as a part of this project, including the zip lines and roller coaster, could impede wildlife movement (per TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 82.3.2). Data from Nevada Department of Wildlife show frequent migration through the project area during mid-May and late October (+/- two weeks). An increase in human activity in these migration corridors (i.e., the project area) during these time periods should be avoided as to not deter mule deer migration, and permanent structures should be designed as to not impede mule deer migration. There are also resident deer within Heavenly's operation area. Please evaluate possible mitigation measures to accommodate mule deer migration during the above-stated timeframes. Possible measures include designing structures with large gaps or high clearance that will allow unimpeded passage for deer, dismantling structures during the migration season, and short-term closures to reduce the number of people in the area during migration. These measures relate to impact BIO-5 on page 3.9-47.
- 5 | 5. Page 3.9-34
Sightings of threatened or endangered species during annual surveys should also be reported to Mark Enders at Nevada Department of Wildlife
- 6 | 6. Page 3.9-44
Mitigation measure BIO-3 is very important and critical for implementation. Performing annual nesting bird surveys at all project locations and creating a 300-ft inactivity buffer around active nests is the only way to eliminate the chances of violating the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. Please provide survey data to Mark Enders at Nevada Department of Wildlife.
- 7 | 7. Page 3.9-47
Mitigation measure BIO-4 is very important and critical for implementation. Ceasing activity within a 100-acre buffer around marten den sites is the best way to avoid affecting this state sensitive species.
- 8 | 8. Page 3.9-47
Citing data from 1975 is inadequate for evaluating current mule deer migration corridors. Current NDOW data show frequent migration through the project area during mid-May and late October (+/- two weeks). This impact, BIO-5, must be re-evaluated with current data.
- 9 | 9. Page 3.9-53
Nevada's Wildlife Action Plan was not consulted during this analysis, even though half of the proposed project will take place in Nevada. The EIS needs to be amended as appropriate to include Nevada's Wildlife Action Plan.

- 10 | **10. Page 3.9-55**
Mitigation measure BIO-8 is extremely important and should be implemented as strictly as possible. Heavenly has had bear problems in the past due to a lack of bear-resistant trash containers (BRCs) and not fully utilizing containers that were available. This particular mitigation measure is the only way to prevent numerous human-bear conflicts in the project area.

Thank for you the opportunity to comment. If there are any questions, please contact me at (775) 684-2736 or at eharrison@lands.nv.gov.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Harrison
Lake Tahoe Coordinator
Nevada Tahoe Resource Team
Nevada Division of State Lands

- Comment 4-1 Impacts to pallid and fringed myotis are discussed in DEIR/EIS/EIS Impact BIO-2. A new design feature (Section 2.3.5, measure WL-10) has been added to the project that requires annual surveys of proposed structures and facilities to minimize disturbance to sensitive bat species that may be present.
- Comment 4-2 Blue grouse are covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and therefore are included in the surveys required under EIR/EIS/EIS Mitigation Measure BIO-3.
- Comment 4-3 Impact BIO-2 includes new language concerning bald eagle: “The bald eagle has been delisted as of 2007. While suitable habitat exists within the Special Use Permit Boundary, no observations of bald eagle have been recorded during wildlife surveys performed 1991-2014. However, due to the suitable roosting habitat in the area surrounding East Peak Lake, the possibility exists for use of the area by bald eagle. The habitat for bald eagle in the East Peak Lake area is of low suitability due to the existing development that lines the west shore of the man-made reservoir, roadways and associated traffic along the north and east sides of the lake and the lack of fish in the lake that would be necessary for forage. Based on the historical absence of this species from the project area and low habitat suitability, there would be no impacts resulting from implementation of the Proposed Action or the Alternatives.”
- Comment 4-4 New language has been added to Impact BIO-5 regarding mule deer: “Mule deer have been observed within the existing and proposed operational boundary of Heavenly Mountain Resort during the spring, summer and autumn months. Nevada Division of Wildlife has mapped the migration corridors of the resident Carson River Deer Herd (NDOW 1975 and NDOW 2014). Nevada Division of Wildlife was contacted to receive recent telemetry data that has been obtained for mule deer within the project area. The data received, confirmed and further supported observations

that mule deer are present within the project area. NDOW also provided a map showing the location of the major movement corridor that lies to the east of the operational boundary of Heavenly in the lower elevations toward the Carson Valley. The telemetry also shows the movement of some individuals through the resort (NDOW 2014). Construction of the proposed projects will not result in any impediment to the movement of mule deer either through structural blockage or from human activity. This map shows the closest mapped migration corridor to the south of the operational footprint of the resort through the High Meadows area. No projects are proposed which would impact or modify this migration corridor.”

- Comment 4-5 Future sightings of threatened, endangered or candidate species will be reported to Mark Enders at Nevada Division of Wildlife.
- Comment 4-6 Future results of migratory bird surveys will be reported to Mark Enders at Nevada Division of Wildlife.
- Comment 4-7 Thank you for taking the time to review Mitigation Measure BIO-4 and for your concurrence on its implementation.
- Comment 4-8 Refer to response to comment 4-4.
- Comment 4-9 The Nevada Wildlife Action Plan is included in the analysis and is described on EIR/EIS/EIS page 3.9-30.
- Comment 4-10 Thank you for taking the time to review Mitigation Measure BIO-8 and for your concurrence on its implementation..

**Comment Letter 5 – Bartlett, Tina, California Department of Fish and Wildlife,
10/20/14**



State of California - The Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
North Central Region/Region 2
1701 Nimbus Road, Suite A
Rancho Cordova, CA 95667
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EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



October 20, 2014

David Landry, Senior Planner
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128 Market Street
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dlandry@trpa.org

RECEIVED
OCT 23 2014
TAHOE REGIONAL
PLANNING AGENCY

Subject: Comments on the Environmental Impact Report/Statement for the Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project (SCH No.2013112051)

Dear Mr. Landry:

- 1 The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is providing comments on the Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/S) for the Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project (project) as both a trustee agency and responsible agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As trustee for the State's fish and wildlife resources, the Department has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and the habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of such species (Guidelines § 15386). The Department may also be a responsible agency for a project affecting biological resources where we will exercise our discretion after the lead agency to approve or carry out a proposed project or some facet thereof (CEQA Guidelines § 15096).

The US Forest Service (USFS), Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU), the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board – Lahonton Region have directed the preparation of a joint environmental document for the project. The project proponent proposes to improve year-round recreation opportunities within the developed portions of the ski area on National Forest System lands using existing facilities and infrastructure to include, but is not limited to, zip-lines, trails, ropes course, coaster, and boat dock. The project site is located partially inside and partially outside the Lake Tahoe Region on the south shore of Lake Tahoe in El Dorado County, California and Douglas County, Nevada.

- 2 The Department has concerns that the EIR/S does not adequately analyze impacts to biological resources nor provide mitigation measures that would reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level. The EIR/S focuses on the impacts associated within the footprint of the project and not the impacts associated with the ongoing use of the facilities that may have significant impacts to sensitive resources. Although the site is currently heavily used in the winter months, the spring and summer may provide valuable habitat for resident and migratory species. In addition, the EIR/S does not provide figures showing the extent of the impacts overlaid on sensitive resources and relies on future surveys to identify locations of sensitive resources.
- 3

Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870

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Sierra Nevada Yellow-Legged Frog

4 A California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) search of the eight 7.5-minute United States Geologic Survey (USGS) quadrangles surrounding the project site revealed that the federally endangered and State-threatened Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (*Rana sierrae*) have been recorded within a five-mile radius of the project (see **Attachment A**). The EIR/S states that breeding habitat for the federally endangered and State-threatened Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (SNYLF) was determined not to occur in the project area; however, the document does not describe the rationale for this conclusion as there are wetlands, creeks and ponds throughout the project area. SNYLF inhabits lakes, ponds, meadow streams, isolated pools, and sunny riverbanks in the Sierra Nevada. If suitable habitat exists within the area of impact, the Department recommends that a minimum of three (3) amphibian surveys are conducted during July and August in accordance with the Amphibian Visual Encounter Surveys (VES) protocols (see references below and **Attachment B**).

5 In addition, the impact analysis is confusing and does not provide adequate mitigation for this species, if found. The analysis does not meet standards as identified in the CEQA Guidelines §§ 15140, which states that "EIRs shall be written in plain language... so that the public can rapidly understand the documents." Although the document states that Sky Meadows Basin and East Peak Reservoir may contain habitat, the document also states that no waters suitable for breeding occurs in the project area or vicinity (see Table 3.9-1, page 3.9-4). Then on page 3.9-35, the document states that these areas are associated with projects. The EIR/S references "mapped suitable habitat" but does not show a map of the habitat.

6 The impact assessment should include the reasonably foreseeable direct and indirect changes (temporary and permanent) that may occur with implementation of the project. The impact analysis does not take into account the disturbance from increased human activities in the area, which may disrupt breeding and migratory behavior. Mitigation BIO-1 defers mitigation through consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog is a State-listed species and therefore the Department recommends that the project proponent consult with Department as well as the USFWS regarding impacts to this species and update the EIR/S as appropriate. Even so, consultation is not mitigation. CEQA Guidelines §15126.4 (a)(1)(B) states that formulation of mitigation measures should not be deferred until some future time. Mitigation measure BIO-1 relies on future approvals or agreements with USFWS as a means to bring identified significant environmental effects to below a level that is significant. Because there is no guarantee that these approvals will ultimately occur, the Department believes that the above mitigation measure is unenforceable and does not bring the impacts to biological resources to below a level that is significant.

Great Gray Owl

8 The EIR/S does not describe the rationale for the conclusion that breeding habitat for the State-endangered great gray owl (*Strix nebulosa*) is not located in the project area (see Table 3.9-1, page 3.9-5). The Department requests additional evaluation of this conclusion. According to the document, the use of the area by the great gray owl is uncertain (page 3.9-12). Recent surveys throughout California have indicated that great gray owls can occur in different habitats than previously thought (CNDDB records; Kevin Roberts at SPI pers. comm.). Surveys for great gray owl were not conducted in the project area and suitable habitat may be present within the project area or vicinity. There is a record less than three (3) miles to the south of the project area (Stermer 2014) and a CNDDB record approximately 14 miles from the project area (CDFW 2014). If great gray owls occur in the area, the increase of recreational activities may have a significant effect on this State-listed species. Although great gray owls were not detected during surveys for spotted owls, protocol-level surveys for great gray owls were not conducted;

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8 therefore, it is not logical to conclude that this State-listed species is not present or that it could not be impacted by the proposed project. The Department recommends that protocol-level surveys are conducted, the impact analysis address reasonably foreseeable direct and indirect changes (temporary and permanent) that may occur with implementation of the project, and that the CEQA document include enforceable mitigation measures.

9 **California Endangered Species Act**

The Department has regulatory authority pursuant to California Endangered Species Act (CESA) over projects that have the potential to result in the take¹ of any species of wildlife designated by the California Fish and Game Commission as an endangered, threatened, or candidate species. Take of species protected pursuant to CESA is prohibited (Fish and Game Code [FGC] § 2080). However, the Department, may authorize the take of these species by permit if the conditions set forth in FGC Section 2081, subdivisions (b) and (c) are met (See also Cal. Code Regs., title 14, § 783.4).

The Department has concern that the project may adversely affect and may have the potential to take a State-listed species' as there is potential for listed species to occur on the site. If the project may result in the take of any species protected pursuant to CESA, an incidental take permit, issued by the Department, should be obtained before the take occurs. If the Department issues an incidental take permit, the Department must rely on the CEQA document to prepare and issue its own findings regarding the project (CEQA Guidelines §§15096 and 15381). The Department will only use the CEQA document if it adequately addresses the effects of those project activities, including all avoidance, minimization and the mitigation required for the take authorization.

The project will increase the extent of recreational activities in the summer time increasing human-wildlife interactions during this sensitive time. Any activity resulting in loss of habitat, decreased reproductive success, or other negative effects on population levels of species protected pursuant to CESA should be addressed, avoidance and minimization measures proposed, and mitigation measures proposed to reduce impacts to a level of less than significant.

10 **Nesting Birds and Raptors**

The project has the potential to disturb bird species or nests protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), FGC §3503 and 3503.5. If the project activities occur during the nesting season (determined by region, species, and climate), construction activities could result in disturbance to nesting raptors and other migratory birds. Raptors and other migratory birds are protected under the MBTA and FGC §3503.5; therefore, potential impacts may be considered potentially significant unless avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation is incorporated. Construction activities should avoid the nesting season or propose mitigation measures to comply with the MBTA and FGC §3503.5. If nests of special-status species are identified on or adjacent to the project site, implementation including on-going operation of the project may have long-term effects on the success of the nest site. The proposed increase in recreational opportunities may result in on-going nest disturbance, if nests are located within or near those activities. Although Mitigation Measure BIO-3 states that annual nest surveys will be conducted in certain areas and a 300-meter buffer will be maintained if a nest is found, for particularly sensitive birds, 300 meters may not be the appropriate distance depending on the activity and level of disturbance. The project may have long-term effects on species that nest in the area. If project activities are proposed in an area with a sensitive resource (such as a raptor nest or

¹ Take is defined in Section 86 of the Fish and Game Code as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill."

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- 10 nursery site) that was not identified in the EIR/S, the extent of the impacts to that resource was not identified, analyzed or mitigated by the CEQA document.

The Department recommends identifying the resources, siting the project activities to avoid those resources, or mitigating to the extent feasible to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. For some small migratory birds, where nest site fidelity is not an issue, regular nest surveys and avoidance would be appropriate. Avoidance may include requiring signs to warn visitors of the sensitive nature of the area or to close certain areas or trails when sensitive species are nesting.

11 **Riparian Habitat**

The EIR/S does not clearly state the extent and impacts to riparian or stream environments. Section 3.2 (Stream Environment Zones) references Section 3.1 (Water Resources), but does not explicitly state whether jurisdictional features are present. According to the California Streams layer in BIOS, several small streams/drainages crisscross the area (**Attachment C**). The construction of trails and the other recreational features have the potential to impact these drainages. The analysis for Water-6 indicates that there will be minimal impacts to Heavenly Valley Creek. The EIR/S does not state what, if any, jurisdictional features will be removed, disturbed, or otherwise altered by the project. An entity (any person, State, local government agency, or public utility) should consider and analyze whether implementation of the proposed project will result in reasonably foreseeable potentially significant impacts subject to regulation by the Department under Section 1600 et seq. of the FGC. In general, such impacts result whenever a proposed project involves work undertaken in or near a river, stream, or lake that flows at least intermittently through a bed or channel, including ephemeral streams and watercourses. As a responsible agency under CEQA, the Department must rely on the CEQA analysis for the project when exercising our discretion after the lead agency to approve or carry out some facet of a proposed project, such as the issuance of a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA). Therefore, the EIR/S should include specific, enforceable measures to be carried out onsite or within the same stream system that will avoid, minimize and/or mitigate for project impacts to the natural resources.

12 **Carson River Deer Mule Deer Herd**

The EIR/S does not analyze the impacts to the Carson River Deer herd from the ongoing human disturbance that will result from the proposed project. The analysis on page 3.9-37 to 38 discusses the potential impacts to deer herds based on the footprint of the structures and not the activities and level of disturbance that will result from the proposed project. The continued or increased presence of humans significantly reduces deer use of any area. Fawning habitats are particularly vulnerable to human disturbance as it may cause significant reductions in herd productivity. The EIR/S states "there is no high quality fawning habitat in project area." The justification for classifying the quality of the habitat is not described in the document and therefore the Department cannot verify its conclusions. In addition, the document states operation "may" directly or indirectly affect the deer but "likely" the effect is small. The Carson River Deer herd is extremely fragile and continues to decline (Shelly Blair pers.comm.). The increased human activity in the Spring and Summer, a vulnerable time for fawns and does, may have significant effects on this declining deer herd as development continues in surrounding areas, even in fawning areas that may be considered medium or low-quality. The Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) has recorded telemetry data showing deer use in the project area (**Attachment D**). The Department recommends revising the analysis to include maps of the potential fawning and migratory habitat for mule deer and demonstrate the avoidance or minimization of impacts to this sensitive deer herd from construction and ongoing implementation of the project.

Mr. Landry
October 20, 2014
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- 13 **Summary**
In summary, the Department finds that the EIR/S may not adequately analyze the impacts to biological resources from the proposed project. An adequate impact analysis and formulation of any necessary mitigation measures should be provided prior to project approval.

Thank you for considering our comments. Department personnel are available for consultation regarding biological resources and strategies to minimize impacts. If you have questions please contact Angela Calderaro, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), by e-mail at Angela.Calderaro@wildlife.ca.gov or by phone at (916) 358-2920.

Sincerely,



Tina Bartlett
Regional Manager

ec: Jeff Drongesen, Jeff.Drongesen@wildlife.ca.gov
Jennifer Nguyen, Jennifer.Nguyen@wildlife.ca.gov
Angela Calderaro, Angela.Calderaro@wildlife.ca.gov
Shelly Blair, Shelly.Blair@wildlife.ca.gov

State Clearinghouse

Attachments:

Attachment A - Eight-quad search of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB)
Centered on *South Lake Tahoe, California* USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle.

Attachment B – Amphibian Visual Encounter Surveys

Attachment C – BIOS map

Attachment D – NDOW telemetry data

References:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2014. Nine-quad search of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) Centered on *South Lake Tahoe, California* USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle. Wildlife and Habitat Data Analysis Branch, Rarefind Version 3.1.1. Government version dated August 1, 2014. Data expires February 1, 2015.

Stermer, Chris. 2014. "Great Grey Owl Observations [ds18]". Calif. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS), Government Edition. Retrieved October 9, 2014 from <http://bios.dfg.ca.gov>.

California Department of Fish and Game
Natural Diversity Database
Selected Elements by Scientific Name - Landscape
Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project

Scientific Name	Common Name	Element Code	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	CNPS	CDFG
1 Accipiter gentilis	northern goshawk	ABNKC12060			G5	S3		SC
2 Astragalinus austiniae	Austin's astragalus	PDFAB0F120			G2G3	S2S3	1B.3	
3 Boechera tularensis	Tulare rockcress	PDBRA40130			G2	S2	1B.3	
4 Botrychium ascendens	upswamp moonwort	PPOPH010S0			G3	S2	2B.3	
5 Botrychium crenulatum	scalloped moonwort	PPOPH010L0			G3	S2	2B.2	
6 Botrychium minganense	mingan moonwort	PPOPH010R0			G4G5	S2	2B.2	
7 Botrychium montanum	western goblin	PPOPH010K0			G3	S2	2B.1	
8 Brasenlia schreberi	watershield	PDCAB01010			G5	S2	2B.3	
9 Bruchia bolanderi	Bolander's bruchia	NBMUS13010			G3	S3?	4.2	
10 Capnia lacustris	Lake Tahoe benthic stonefly	IPLD03200			G1	S1		
11 Carex davyl	Davy's sedge	PMCPY033H0			G2	S2	1B.3	
12 Carex lasiocarpa	woolly-fruited sedge	PMCPY03720			G5	S2	2B.3	
13 Carex limosa	mud sedge	PMCPY037K0			G5	S3	2B.2	
14 Chaenactis douglasii var. alpina	alpine dusty maidens	PDAST20065			G5T5	S2	2B.3	
15 Cryptantha crymophila	subalpine cryptantha	PDBOR0A0R0			G3	S3	1B.3	
16 Cypseloides niger	black swift	ABNUA01010			G4	S2		SC
17 Draba asterophora var. asterophora	Tahoe draba	PDBRA11001			G2T2	S2	1B.2	
18 Draba asterophora var. macrocarpa	Cup Lake draba	PDBRA11002			G2T1	S1	1B.1	
19 Empidonax traillii	willow flycatcher	ABPAE33040		Endangered	G5	S1S2		
20 Epilobium howellii	subalpine fireweed	PDONA06180			G4	S4	4.3	
21 Epilobium palustre	marsh willowherb	PDONA060R0			G5	S2	2B.3	
22 Eriogonum luteolum var. saltuarium	Jack's wild buckwheat	PDPGN083S4			G5T1	S1	1B.2	
23 Erythranthe carsonensis	Carson Valley monkeyflower	PDPHR01020			G1	S1	1B.1	
24 Fen	Fen	CTT51200CA			G2	S1.2		
25 Glycyrrhiza grandis	American manna grass	PMPOA2Y080			G5	S2	2B.3	
26 Gulo gulo	California wolverine	AMAJF03010	Proposed Threatened	Threatened	G4	S1		
27 Haliaeetus leucocephalus	bald eagle	ABNKC10010		Endangered	G5	S2		
28 Hellsoma newberryi	Great Basin rams-horn	IMGASM6020			G1Q	S1		
29 Helodermis blanfordii	Blanford's bog moss	NBMUS3C010			G5	S1	2B.3	
30 Lepus americanus tahoenensis	Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare	AMAEB03012			G5T3T4Q	S2?		SC
31 Lepus townsendii townsendii	western white-tailed jackrabbit	AMAEB03041			G5T5	S3?		SC
32 Lewisia longipetala	long-petaled lewisia	PDPOR040K0			G3	S3	1B.3	

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Information Expires 02/01/2015

California Department of Fish and Game
Natural Diversity Database
Selected Elements by Scientific Name - Landscape
Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project

Scientific Name	Common Name	Element Code	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	CNPS	CDFG
33 Lithobates plerps	northern leopard frog	AAABH01170			G5	S2		SC
34 Martes caurina sierrae	Sierra marten	AMAJF01014			G5T3	S3		
35 Meesia triquetra	three-ranked hump moss	NBMUS4L020			G5	S4	4.2	
36 Meesia uliginosa	broad-nerved hump moss	NBMUS4L030			G4	S3	2B.2	
37 Myotis thysanodes	fringed myotis	AMACC01090			G4	S4		
38 Myotis volans	long-legged myotis	AMACC01110			G5	S4?		
39 Ochotona princeps schisticeps	gray-headed pika	AMAEA0102H			G5T2T4	S2S4		
40 Oncorhynchus clarkii henshawi	Lahontan cutthroat trout	AFCHA02081	Threatened		G4T3	S2		
41 Pandion haliaetus	osprey	ABNKC01010			G5	S3		
42 Pekania pennanti	fisher - West Coast DPS	AMAJF01021	Candidate	Threatened	G5T2T3Q	S2S3		SC
43 Peltigera gowardii	western waterfern lichen	NLVER00460			G3G4	S3	4.2	
44 Picoides arcticus	black-backed woodpecker	ABNYF07090			G5	SNR		
45 Potamogeton robbinsi	Robbins' pondweed	PMPO03020			G5	S3	2B.3	
46 Rana sierrae	Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog	AAJ2BH01340	Proposed Endangered	Threatened	G1	S1		SC
47 Riparia riparia	bank swallow	ABPAU08010		Threatened	G5	S2S3		
48 Rorippa subumbellata	Tahoe yellow cross	PDBRA270M0	Candidate	Endangered	G1	S1	1B.1	
49 Schoenoplectus subterminalis	water bulrush	PMCPY00Q1G0			G4G5	S3	2B.3	
50 Scutellaria galericulata	marsh skullcap	PDLAM1U0J0			G5	S2	2B.2	
51 Speyeria nokomis carsonensis	Carson Valley silverspot	ILLEP J6056			G3T1	S1		
52 Sphagnum Bog	Sphagnum Bog	CTT131110CA			G3	S1.2		
53 Stuckenia filiformis ssp. alpina	slender-leaved pondweed	PMPO03091			G5T5	S3	2B.2	
54 Stygobromus laticolus	Lake Tahoe amphipod	ICMAL05970			G1	S1		
55 Stygobromus tahoensis	Lake Tahoe stygobromid	ICMAL05A70			G1	S1		
56 Taxidea taxus	American badger	AMAJF04010			G5	S4		SC
57 Utricularia ochroleuca	cream-flowered bladderwort	PDLNT020E0			G4?	S1	2B.2	
58 Viola purpurea ssp. aurea	golden violet	PDVIO04420			G5T2T3	S2S3	2B.2	
59 Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus	yellow-headed blackbird	ABPEXB3010			G5	S3		SC

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2013 Sierra Nevada Fish and Amphibian Inventory Protocols

Version 2.52 May, 10 2013

California Department of Fish & Wildlife
HML-Fish/Amphibian Survey Protocols

Overview

Fill out a separate data sheet (substitute "Palm entry" for "data sheet" as necessary) for every lake and pond that has a Site ID, regardless of how un-lake like the site is. If the site is dry, frozen, inaccessible, not found or on private property indicate why a full datasheet was not filled out on the map portion of the datasheet or the condition field and comment field of survey main (e.g., "pond was dry"). Some data subforms will still need to be filled out in the Palm unit (see below). If you encounter ponds not shown on the 7.5' maps, fill out a complete data sheet and assign the site a new ID# from the site IDs list. Meadows, marshes, and spring seeps should always be surveyed, even if they do not have Site IDs. When you visit non-lake habitat such as marshes that contain extensive ponded water, complete a single survey for the entire area. It is critical that all relevant portions of each data sheet be filled out, and that non-relevant portions be indicated as such, not simply left blank. Remember, if the data sheet is improperly filled out, the visit was a complete waste of time and money. At the very least a VES should be conducted, an overview photo (with GPS location) taken and sketch made and recorded in the appropriate portions of the datasheet. If you are using a Palm, enter ALL survey data in your notebook. Digital data is not infallible.

When you complete surveys in habitats that do not contain ponded water (e.g., streams), record the start and end UTM coordinates in the amphibian/reptile visual survey section and complete all other pertinent sections. Many stream sections that will be surveyed are associated with other Site IDs (e.g., 200 m of each inlet and outlet) and the survey data should be entered on the associated Site ID's data sheet. Record all observations in ball point pen.

Recording Numbers: Use the dot-line method for recording the number of "hits" in fields that require a count (4 hits: . . . ; 8 hits: . . . ; 10 hits: . . .), instead of the more typical four vertical lines and a slash. The dot-line method is much more space-efficient and is easier to read. In addition to categorizing the substrate type at each spot, record the presence or absence of aquatic vegetation at each spot (record hits using the dot-line method).

Gen. Lake Descript ('Review/Update Lake' and 'New Lake' Buttons/'New Survey' Button

Site ID: This is a critical number, as it will be used to link the data sheet to a particular body of water and to identify all samples. This ID is written on the 7.5' maps available for crews to take into the field. Check the Site ID carefully before recording it on the data sheet. If you encounter a lake or pond that is not shown on the 7.5' map or a marsh, meadow or spring seep that does not have a Site ID, its Site ID will be taken from a list of available IDs. Each crew member will have a list of unique numbers issued to them. Keep track of your list and do not use numbers more than once.

Location: This description should always be provided, and must be detailed enough to allow someone not familiar with the area to pinpoint the lake on a topographic map. This information is particularly critical for unnamed lakes because the GPS point is the only other reference for the location of the water body. Do not leave this space blank, no matter how obvious the lake feature is. At a minimum, give the distance and the compass direction from the site to two nearby prominent named geographical features (e.g., lakes, peaks, etc.). Lake and peak names, distances, and compass directions should be taken from 7.5' maps. Palm - Use the survey main comment field to note location.

Date: Write as month-day-year (Aug-10-01) and always use the three letter abbreviation for month. Palm- ensure this field auto-populates correctly. If your palm's date is incorrect this field will also be incorrect. If entering data in a palm after the survey was conducted, be sure to change the value of this field to the appropriate survey date!

Lake name: Lake names generally originate from the 7.5' topo map. However, CDFW has also implemented its own naming system for the stocking program. Field crews should have a pre-generated field lake checklist with the proper CDFW lake name and corresponding Site ID. Use this list to populate the Lake name field (data sheet only).

Palm - Lake names should be auto-populated based upon the names from the high_mountain_lakes.shp in the GIS data framework.

Note – consecutively numbered lakes (i.e. Big Pine Lake 1, Big Pine Lake 2, etc.) are numbered starting from lowest elevation and ending at the highest elevation lake.

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Water type: Make a comment in the "Survey Main" comment field listing water type as one of these ONLY: Lake, Stream, Marsh/meadow, Spring seep, POAW, Snowfield or Reservoir).

Lakes should always receive the full protocol and have all applicable fields filled out.

Any unmapped lentic water body that is surveyed, regardless of size, falls under the category of LAKE. Unmapped ponds should be completely surveyed as lakes. Visual fish surveys are **not** acceptable if fish are present even if the site is small and unmapped. A GPS track of the entire perimeter and all inlets and outlets should be recorded.

Stream sites (lotic) should have a complete VES (with GPS track), visual fish survey, shrimp survey, sketch and photo, but do not require littoral and shoreline habitat surveys or inlet and outlet surveys. Palm - Remember to record the start and end GPS points of the stream reach surveyed in the amphibian header subform. The auto populated GPS point in the palms refers always to the downstream start point. Survey upstream and record in the survey comments where you ended the reach. Note that the crew leader should have a list available showing the end reach GPS point. If fish are seen a fish data subform should be filled out to indicate fish presence on a GIS coverage. If possible record fish species and an estimated length for one fish of each species identified. If fish species is unknown record as UKN. Remember to include a descriptive comment on fish numbers and type. (IE: "Saw one unknown trout species."; "Pool filled with BK".)

Marsh/Meadow sites should be surveyed as a single site. Collect a GPS track of the perimeter of the site and any surveyed areas. These will be used to generate a GIS polygon for the site. Alternatively, record as many points as needed to characterize the general shape of the marsh/meadow and enter these into the comment field. Usually less than 10 points will suffice. Complete a VES, visual fish survey, shrimp survey, sketch, and photo. Littoral and shoreline habitat surveys do not apply. If fish are seen a fish data subform should be filled out (see above-stream sites).

Spring seep sites should have a VES (with GPS track), visual fish survey, shrimp survey, sketch and overview photo. Littoral and shoreline habitat surveys do not apply. If fish are seen a fish data subform should be filled out (see above-stream sites).

Seasonality: The determination of whether a water body is perennial or ephemeral should be made based on field determination. Cues such as grass or terrestrial vegetation on the lake bottom; undecomposed duff; obvious bath tub ring; or low lake level can be used to assess status. 7.5' maps may help the surveyor make a call. Perennial lakes and ponds are shown in dark blue, ephemeral lakes and ponds are shown in white with blue diagonal lines, and marshes are indicated by a marsh symbol.

Condition: If the water body indicated on the map is frozen, dry, not found, inaccessible, or on private property your sampling will be limited. Circle the appropriate reason from the list above why the water body was not fully sampled.

Frozen water bodies of two types can be encountered. Completely frozen sites offer little to no opportunity to survey for animals, thus indicate the site is frozen in the appropriate check box and comment fields, take an overview photo with GPS point and move on. Partially frozen sites may offer some opportunity to VES for amphibians, furthermore, this is often the time when high mountain species begin breeding. List the condition as "surveyable" and indicate in the comments that the site is partially frozen (%), take an overview photo with GPS point, and conduct a VES.

Dry sites can often have newly metamorphosed Bufo species and Hyla regilla. VES the site, including any tributaries, and take an overview photo with GPS point.

Sites that are not found should have only the top box of the data sheet filled out, indicating that the site was not found in the "Location" box. Palm - fill out a survey main and choose "not found" from the pick list for condition. If you are navigating to a site with given GPS point and find no evidence that a site exists at this location you should reconnoiter a circular area of 50m from this point to attempt to locate the site. GPS accuracy may be as poor as 30m or more due to satellite locations, tree cover, steep canyons, etc.

Stream widenings are those water bodies shown as perennial ponds but that have more than 10% of their surface area with noticeable current, i.e., these are more like stream pools than ponds. A VES and photo should still be taken.

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If the water body of interest is actually part of another water body (POAW), sample and complete a data sheet for the larger water body, and fill out only the top box of the data sheet for the smaller water body, indicating that it is actually part of the larger water body in the "Location" box. In other words, the site that is considered part of another waterbody will receive a full survey under the Lake ID of the larger site. Palm – fill out a survey main for the site but indicate in the comments that the full data set is associated with a different site and list the site ID in the comments of the survey main. Example: Survey main for site 123.00 states in the comments, "This site is POAW with 127.00, all data associated with site 127.00". Survey main for site 127.00 states in the comments "Includes data for site 123.00, site is POAW with 127.00".

Planning Watershed: The watershed name for all lakes is given on the "Lakes Checklist." Do not use the name of the outlet creek given on the 7.5' map as the drainage name, as this may not be a complete description. Palm - The watershed name should be auto-populated for all pre-identified site IDs. If a new site is being surveyed, use your survey map to identify which planning watershed the new site is located in, and pick the appropriate watershed name from the picklist.

County: For NEW SITES ONLY record the county (from 7.5' map) in which the lake feature lies into the Ref Lakes Subform".

Elevation: For NEW SITES and BASELINES ONLY record the elevation from the 7.5' map, or a calibrated altimeter (such as the altimeter feature in the Garmin GPS) into the Ref Lakes Subform (NewLake button on Palm). When using the map look for labeled contour lines to determine contour interval distance and units. Be aware that maps generated in the office by GIS software that span multiple 7.5' quads may display intervals in both meters and feet. The lake elevation is the average of the contour line below the lake and the contour line above the lake. Thus, if a lake is between the 9860' contour and the 9900' contour, the lake elevation should be recorded as 9880'. A common mistake is to assume that the proximity of a lake to a contour line indicates that the elevation of the lake is close to the value of that contour line. The horizontal distance between two points on a topographic map bears no relationship to the vertical distance between those same two points.

If the lake has a water level elevation (i.e. WL 9832), use this number. (note- water level elevations are a good source to calibrate an altimeter).

UTM Coordinates: This is a pair of numbers that are basically x and y coordinates. In our area, they are North and East. These numbers need only be obtained for lakes not shown on the 7.5' maps or for those lakes lacking a Site ID. Use a GPS unit to obtain the UTM coordinates. Also record the UTM zone that you are in. **Make sure your GPS is setup in UTM NAD83.** These coordinates are critical as they will be used to map the lake.

Maximum lake depth: Measure maximum lake depth with the Speedtech SM-5 Depthmate Portable Sounder. Do not spend inordinate amounts of time sounding every part of the lake to find exactly the deepest part. By sounding the deepest-looking area of the lake, you will quickly get a feel for where the deepest spot actually is. Precise measurements of "maximum depth" are not very important in large deep lakes. However, in shallow lakes (< 5 m) a precise depth (± 0.5 m) is very important. Plan to take maximum depths when setting or retrieving gill nets, but the data must still be collected even when nets are not set. **This data field was ignored too often in the past but is very important for determining future management options!** Enter this value on the Fish Data Form at the top of page 3, or at the bottom on page 2 if no gill net fish survey was completed for a site. In the Palms the Max Depth field is located in the Ref Lakes Subform under the Review/Update Lakes tab. Maximum lake depth should be measured even when field crews are not equipped with a depth sounder. There are many methods to improvise and collect depth measurement, but the simplest is often a known length of cord and a rock.

Team Members: Palm - All crew involved in data collection should be recorded in the Surveyors Subform. Only crew members involved in the VES should have the VES box checked.

Lake Characteristics

The habitat characterization is perhaps the most subjective of the measurements made using this protocol and we hope to reduce the potentially high observer bias by stressing the need for survey consistency. In other words, it is important to practice the protocol, calibrate visual estimates with real measurements, check each other's data, and maintain consistent survey methods.

Littoral zone substrate composition: While walking around the lake perimeter during the VES survey (see [Amphibian/Reptile Surveying](#), below), stop after a set number of paces (see below) and categorize the **dominant** substrate at the lake edge as one of the following: silt, sand (<2mm), gravel (2-32mm), small cobble (32-64mm),

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large cobble (64-256mm), boulder (>256mm), bedrock, or woody debris (pine needles and pine cones = "woody debris").

Categorize the substrate along an imaginary transect line starting at the lake edge, extending perpendicular from shore, and lying along the first 3 meters (10 feet) of the lake bottom. Record the number of hits for each substrate category in the appropriate field. Record a "0" for categories with no hits. Only record aquatic vegetation hits on transect with at least 10% coverage. This avoids over-representing aquatic vegetation in the lake characterization. Record this information under "Substrate transects with aquatic vegetation". Only GSF vegetation should be counted; it does not matter if the vegetation is aquatic or terrestrial. Increase the number of paces between transects when surveying large lakes and decrease the number of paces for small ponds. Shoot for fifty transects, as this is a sufficient number to provide an accurate description of the littoral zone of lakes. Lake perimeter (auto-populated in survey main for existing sites, or estimated) can be divided by 50 for number of meters between transects.

For very small sites where you can observe the entire littoral zone substrate from a single location, it is permissible to estimate the littoral substrate composition by size category visually, and then to record your estimates as percent values for each size category (make sure the total of all substrate categories equals 100%). If the lake contains large numbers of amphibians, conduct the amphibian/reptile survey first and then walk around the lake a second time to measure substrate composition.

Littoral zone depth: At each of the littoral zone transects, also record the water depth at one meter from the shoreline and record in one of the following depth categories (in centimeters): 0-15, 16-30, 31-45, 46-60, >60. As with the littoral zone substrate composition for very small sites, it is permissible to estimate the water depth at one meter visually, and then to record your estimates as percent values for each size category (make sure the total of all depth categories equals 100%).

Shoreline terrestrial substrate composition: At each of the littoral zone transects, also record the dominant substrate along an imaginary line starting at the lake shore (or the top of the "bath tub ring" if the lake's water level is below full pool) and running for 1.5 meters (5 feet) perpendicular and away from the lake shoreline. The substrate categories are silt-64mm, 65-256mm, bedrock, grass/sedge/forb, brush and woody debris. As with the littoral zone substrate composition for very small sites, it is permissible to estimate the terrestrial substrate composition by size category visually, and then to record your estimates as percent values for each size category (make sure the total of all substrate categories equals 100%). Note: brush = willows and other woody plants; forbs = non-woody plants.

Percentage Method: if you are able to stand in one spot and view the entire lake shore, substrate, etc. you may estimate the above categories using percentages of the entire lake, rather than the transect method. This can save time on small water bodies. Make sure the percentage check box is checked on your datasheet or palm and that the numbers for one category add up to 100%. If you use this method you should be looking at all littoral zone habitat, not just habitat 3 meters from shore.

Tributary Characteristics

Each significant tributary to the water body should be surveyed for 200 meters for fish and amphibians. In addition general characteristics of each tributary should be recorded, see below.

Any tributary displayed on a 7.5' map should generally be surveyed and inlet/outlet information completed. Small rills should be surveyed for amphibians, but not necessarily included as a distinct tributary. Within the continuum of tributary sizes and complexities, field crews will be required to distinguish "significant" tributaries from those which do not warrant full tributary surveys. Keep in mind the primary purpose of tributary information is to assess important habitat for fish and amphibians, but not to be bogged down with intense micro-habitat analysis.

Palm – It is very important that palm users realize there is no inherent method of tracking barrier photo data to a specific tributary. Thus, ALWAYS assign a number for each tributary (i.e. Inlet 2, or Outlet 1) even if there is only one tributary. It is important to make sure the same tributary number is listed on the barrier photo subform. Also, tributary numbers must be recorded on lake sketches.

Tributary GPS points: Record a GPS point where each tributary joins the lake. Also record a GPS point at the end of your tributary survey. This will help to match inlet/outlet data to the correct tributary.

Tributary number: Record number assigned for each tributary (i.e. Inlet 1, Inlet 2, or Outlet 1). This same number is to be recorded on lake sketch and included in barrier information, so that the correct barrier can be

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associated with the correct tributary. NOTE: Tributaries ARE NOT meadow rills, snowmelt rills, or anything that might in good conscious be called a rill.

Width and depth of inlets & outlets: While conducting the VES of inlets and outlets estimate the average width and depth of each tributary **at bank full**, even if dry. Inlets generally are widest at the point at which they enter the lake, so obtain the average width and depth upstream of this point. If there are no inlets, circle "no inlets". If inlet is dry check "Dry" and continue to survey for barriers and amphibians. If there are no outlets, circle "no outlets". If outlet is dry enter "Dry" and continue to survey for barriers and amphibians.

Palm – The presence or absence of inlets and outlets will need to be entered into the "Ref Lakes Subform" (Found by hitting "Review/Update Lake" button). Use your reference Lakes spreadsheet to determine if opening the Ref Lakes subform is necessary.

Presence of fish in inlets and outlets: Record whether there are fish present in the first 200 m of each inlet and outlet stream by circling "Y" or "N" for each feature. If there are no inlets or outlets, leave this section blank. If inlets and outlets are dry, fish may be present in isolated pools and this is data that needs to be captured.

Distance to first barrier on inlets and outlets: Pace off 200 meters of each tributary, recording the distance from the lake to the first impassable barrier. Dry tributaries should still be surveyed. The barrier location should be recorded as the number of meters from the lake. Barriers are falls >0.75 m high if there is no pool at the base, falls >1.5 m if there is a pool at the base, or steep cascades higher than approximately 1.5 m. Logjams can float during high water, and should generally not be considered barriers. Because fish can often get over remarkable obstacles, be conservative in what you call a barrier. Provide a description of each barrier on page 2 of the data sheet (see Detailed lake and inlet/outlet description, below) or in the barrier subform in the Palm. If there are no barriers check the "Barriers not present" box.

Description of fish barrier(s), UTM coordinates, photo number: Provide GPS UTM coordinates, photo number, and a brief description of each barrier in the spaces provided. If additional space is needed, use page 2 of the data sheet (see Detailed lake and inlet/outlet description, below). In the Palm enter all photo data (photo #, camera #, Time and photo type) into the "Photo Documents Subform". It is important to read the appropriate protocols for camera setup and file naming information. Make sure your GPS is setup with the proper settings referenced in the appropriate protocol.

Spawning habitat in inlets and outlets: Up to the first barrier of each inlet and outlet or to the end of the survey reach if no barrier exists, make a visual estimate of the amount of the streambed **between the lake and the first barrier** that is suitable trout spawning habitat. The amount of spawning habitat should be recorded in terms of the number of square meters of stream bottom with the following characteristics: gravel 0.5-4 cm in diameter and not cemented into the streambed, water depths of 10-50 cm, and water velocities of 20-60 cm/s for successful spawning.

Spawning habitat data is used to estimate whether fish populations are self-sustaining. Use good calibration techniques and real measurements as necessary to assure accuracy.

Evidence of spawning in inlets and outlets: Check each inlet and outlet for evidence of spawning **between the lake and the first barrier**, if a barrier is present. This could be spawning trout, redds (nests), or newly-hatched fry (20-30 mm). Redds are often very obvious, being patches of freshly cleaned gravel 0.5-1 m in length. If you aren't sure if what you are seeing is in fact a redd, dig into the downstream portion of the disturbed gravel while holding a net downstream. If it is a redd, you should find eggs in the net after disturbing the gravel. For each inlet and outlet, circle all types of evidence that you find. If you don't find any evidence of spawning, circle "None".

Area of in-lake spawning habitat: Estimate the amount of suitable spawning habitat (using the spawning habitat criteria given above) in the lake at the mouth of each inlet and outlet. Look for the presence of spawning trout and completed redds. Note any significant habitat of this sort in the Fish Header comments.

Description of other in-lake spawning habitat: Restrict your description of "other in-lake spawning habitat" to areas where you observe spawning fish, redds, or large numbers of fry in areas of the lake away from inlets and outlets.

Fairy Shrimp

During the amphibian survey, be on the look out for schools of fairy shrimp. The distribution of these 2-3 cm crustaceans is poorly known for the Sierra Nevada, so we are interested in describing localities. Look for them in all

Sierra lake sampling protocol -6-

bodies of water you sample. When walking around a lake, take a few minutes to also look in small pools and ponds adjacent to the lake.

If you find fairy shrimp either in your samples or during the survey of lake characteristics, indicate this on the data sheet by circling "Y" or "N" to the questions about fairy shrimp locations ("Present in lake?", "In lake-associated pools?", "Other locations?"). "Lake associated pools" are pools within 2 m of the lake. Be specific in your location descriptions, and provide a brief description of these locations (e.g., "1 m² pool 0.5 m from lakeshore on N side of lake 70675, pool is 10 cm deep"). Information on the fairy shrimp populations should include, at a minimum, location, surface area, and depth of the habitats.

Palm – If fairy shrimp are not found open the subform and write "NO SHRIMP" in the comment field.

Amphibian Surveying

Introduction: We will be conducting amphibian surveys at all bodies of water shown on 7.5' topographic maps, streams, and at sites not shown on the map but found during surveys and while traveling between sites. Each surveyor should have a timepiece to record the duration of time spent surveying, a notebook to record data, a dipnet and GPS unit. Be aware that many sites have more areas of potential habitat or inlets than are shown on a map. Generally we are not targeting reptiles but are identifying species and recording garter snake sightings. These animals are amphibian predators and may indicate amphibian presence when none are seen.

To conduct an amphibian survey, walk slowly around the perimeter of the site, or along the stream, counting the number of adults, sub-adults, metamorphs, larvae, and egg masses you find of each species. Pause often to look ahead for basking animals. Use your dip net to sweep habitat and banks in an effort to spook animals. When surveying a lake, VES all inlets and outlets (see above) and lump with the lake VES data. Meadow/marsh sites should be surveyed systematically with multiple surveyors in an effort to survey the entire site. As needed, use the sterilized D-net or aquarium net to catch amphibians and reptiles for identification. Consult the field guide provided for adult and larval identification.

Record total numbers of individuals observed by species and life stage in the appropriate field. If no animals are seen during the VES, record "none" in the field. Species abbreviations are given on the data sheet. Palm- use the pick lists for species abbreviations. If no animals are seen make sure that the "Amphibians NOT Present" checkbox is checked on the amphibian header subform and do not fill out an amphibian data subform.

Under "Comments", record any interesting observations made during the survey (e.g., mountain yellow-legged frog larvae found only in shallow lagoon on NW side of lake). Also record locations of interesting observations on the map of the lake that you draw (see below). If you are surveying inlets or outlets of a lake and encounter amphibian species, record your observations on a separate line on the data sheet and note the approximate locations and species on the inlet and/or outlet diagrams on page two. Palm – use the comment field in amphibian header to note interesting or important observations, or the numbers of animals seen in inlets/outlets, or numbers of multi-age class tads observed.

Time of day, temperature, and weather are important factors affecting the quality of any VES survey. Time your surveys to be during the warm portions of the day (roughly 9am – 5pm, however time window can vary depending upon time of year and local conditions). If the weather is too cold or stormy, VES surveys can be very inaccurate and should not be conducted.

Survey start time and end time: Record the time at which the survey began and ended. The start time is the time the amphibian survey began, not the time you arrived at the site. The end time is the time you finished the VES. Palm – Times MUST be in 24 hour format. Double check them since the palms auto populate to current time.

Total survey duration: Record the total time spent searching for amphibians/reptiles. Do not include time spent surmounting lake-side obstacles (e.g., cliffs), identifying specimens, or recording notes. If two people survey the same site by walking in opposite directions around the lake perimeter, the total survey duration should include the time spent surveying by each person. This data tells how much effort went into the survey.

Weather/wind/color/turbidity: Circle the appropriate descriptor for each.

Stream survey: Using the GPS unit, record the UTM locations at the beginning and end of your stream survey.

Sierra lake sampling protocol -7-

Stream order: Stream order is a classification based on branching of streams. On a map showing all intermittent and permanent streams, the smallest unbranched tributaries are designated order 1. Where two first order streams meet, a second order stream is formed. Where two second order streams meet, a third order stream is formed (and so on...). Using your 7.5' topo map, identify which order of stream you are surveying, and record it in the box provided.

Calling?: Were any frogs calling during your survey? Circle yes or no.

Chytrid Swabs/Toe Clips: Will be collected from populations of mountain yellow-legged frogs. Note that this is done on a population basis and not for each site. Use best judgment in determining the parameters of the population. Up to 20 swabs from different individuals, usually adults, will be taken at the sites that support each population.

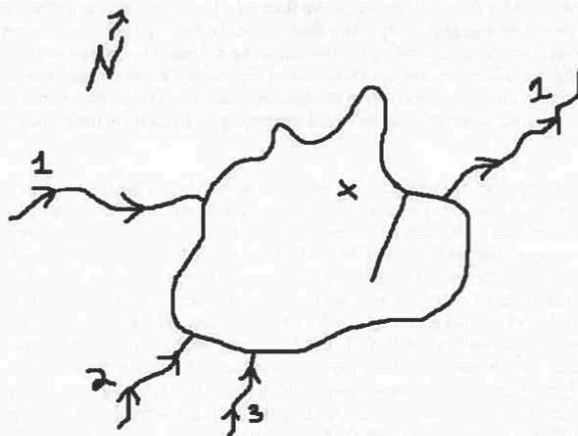
Survey Method: Circle the method used. Note: Mountain yellow-legged frogs do not have a significant call, so aural surveys will not apply.

Air and Water Temperatures: Measure the air temperature from the lake shore at 1 meter above the lake surface. Measure water temperature approximately 0.5m out from shore and 10cm under the water surface. Record the time that temperatures were measured after the @ symbol and the temperature units (C).

Detailed Lake and Inlet/Outlet Sketches

Drawing of lake perimeter, inlets, outlets and areas of special interest: Draw the lake perimeter as best you can, use the shape on the 7.5' map if necessary. The most important information that should be included on the sketch is the inlet and outlet locations and corresponding tributary number, max depth location, net set location, North arrow (see symbology below). If there is room, note any important Mountain yellow-legged frog habitat features, such as egg mass or larvae clusters. Add a second sketch if needed. The Palms do not have a lot of room for clutter on the sketch, so keep sketches simple and not cluttered with unnecessary information such as locations of trees, boulders, small islands, good cliff jumping locations, snow fields or talus fields.

Sketch symbology: North arrow = an N with a little arrow at the top; max depth = X ; net set location = a line from the shore; Inlets and Outlets should have tributary number and can be simplified to In1 or In2 for inlets and O1 or O2 for outlets. Also include arrows <<< for directional flow (i.e. either towards or away from lake). See example below:



Overview Photos

Introduction: All surveyed sites should have an overview photo taken. Try to find a location that allows you to capture the entire site and the habitat provided by that site. Thus a lake overview photo should capture the entire lake as well as the shoreline and any inlet or outlet marsh complexes that may be present. Use the panoramic photo functionality of the camera as needed and note how many photos were taken (Palm - in photo comments). Often forests or flat terrain inhibit good overview photos. In these cases, do the best you can.

Photo Document Type Subform:

Sierra lake sampling protocol -8-

Photo Device: Record the device number of the camera – generally the serial number

Photo Type: Choose from the selection the reason or subject of the photo.

Photo Numbers: Record photo file number. See Appendix for camera setup and additional file naming information.

Photo GPS: Record GPS location data. (UTM NAD 83)

Photo Times: The times are used to reference a photo to a particular site. It is important to record these times accurately and to ensure that both the camera and Palm date and times are properly set up.

Fish Surveying

Introduction: We will be conducting fish surveys at all bodies of water shown on 7.5' topographic maps and at sites not shown on the map but found during surveys and while traveling between sites.

Our fish survey methods are designed to provide an accurate representation of fish species composition and size structure in lakes and ponds, as well as provide an estimate of catch per unit effort (CPUE) at each location. In order to quantify the size structure of each fish species present at a particular location, we need a sample of at least 20 fish, and preferably not more than 50. Obviously, in lakes that have a very small fish population, capturing even 10 fish may not be possible.

We will set one net in each lake for 8-12 hours. Nets can be set at any time of day. To minimize logistical problems and safety hazards, do not pull nets at night. Time your net sets appropriately. For example, don't set a net at 5 PM, since this would mean either pulling the net at 1-5 AM or waiting until morning and exceeding the 12 hour maximum set duration. You should plan on setting nets in the late evening or early morning.

If you are setting a net in a lake with an extremely dense trout population (typically lakes with brook trout), you may want to paddle over the net with a float tube after 4 hours and get a rough count of the number of fish captured. If you have 40 or more fish after 4 hours, pull the net to avoid capturing an inordinate number of specimens. Use this 4 hour net set duration only when absolutely necessary. If gill-netting a lake that contains amphibians, you need not worry that the net will trap them. If turtles are present, set the gill nets during the day only and check the nets frequently to ensure that these species are not getting entangled.

Before setting a gill net, submerge the entire net (still contained on the handle); dry nets are much more susceptible to tangling. Get in your float tube and wedge the bag between rocks at the lake shore and pull on it gently to ensure that it is firmly anchored. With the net lying across the float tube (lead-line on your left and net handle in your right hand or vice versa), paddle backwards slowly while feeding out the net. The net should be set perpendicular to the shore. If you encounter a tangle while feeding out the net, shake the net. Do not pull on the net as this will often tighten the tangle. Shaking will nearly always rid the net of the tangle. When you get to the end of the net, attach a float to the handle and then clip the second bag to the bottom of the net. Paddle backwards until the net is taught, and then drop the bag. Use the depth sounder to record the net depth. Record the time when you finish setting the net.

After 8-12 hours, retrieve the net by pulling the net up by the float. Detach the float and the rock bag. Pull the net toward you, placing the float line on the needle/handle in approximately 2 foot intervals (every second "float"). Continue pulling in the net until you reach the shore. Remove the second bag. To carry the net to an area for fish removal, cradle the net over your arms keeping the lead line on one side and the float line on the other. Lay the net down in a meadow or on a sandy flat (a meadow is preferable, but nearly any place will work; stay away from areas with lots of woody vegetation, pine needles, pine cones, and sharp rocks since they will get snagged in the net). Spread out the first 10 feet of net and remove the fish. After removing all fish from the first 10 feet of net, spread the next 10 feet of net and fold up the first 10 feet. Continue until you have removed all fish from the net. Restring the net onto the handle, rinse the net in the lake, dry the net in the shade, tie the net in a knot to prevent tangling, and stuff it into a sack. The net may be set again without sterilization if the receiving water is located downstream from the previous netting site. If the next netting site is located above the previous site, or in a separate drainage (even a small side drainage within the same basin) then the net must be sterilized (see sterilization protocol).

Fish survey method: If fish are observed, generally set a net. Record whether fish were surveyed visually or using gill nets. Except for small, shallow (<2 m) bodies of water in which the surveyor can see the entire lake bottom, we typically sample fish populations using gill nets. If there is any question as to whether fish are present in a lake, set a net. The decision whether to set a gill net in a shallow pond is up to the crew leader, but keep in mind that fish can live in some very marginal habitats. If only a visual fish survey is needed (e.g., because the lake is < 2m deep and you can see the entire bottom and there are positively no fish), you need not fill out the third and fourth pages of the

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datasheet. (For Palms the "Fish Header" is all you need fill out if there are no fish. The "Fish Data Subform" must be fill out when fish are seen or caught.)

Visual Survey Justification: If you surveyed for fish visually, provide a brief justification as to why you chose this method (Use the pick list values only; Stream, Meadow/marsh, Entire Bottom Visible). Remember, if fish are seen you should almost always set a net.

Net set time and date: Record the time when you completed the net setting process, not the time when you started setting the net. Record the time as 24 hr time. Record the date on which the net was set. Palm – Times MUST be in 24 hour format. Double check them since the palms auto-populate to current time.

Net pull time and date: Record the time when you began pulling the net. Record the date on which the net was pulled. Palm – Times MUST be in 24 hour format. Double check them since the palms autopopulate to current time.

Site ID: If you are setting a gill net to survey a fish population, fill out pages 3 and 4 of the datasheet. First, record the Site ID again. This identifier will ensure that both sheets of the datasheet are associated with the correct lake. Make sure that the Site ID you record is the correct one and matches the Site ID on the first page of the datasheet.

Description of net location/setting nets: Circle the appropriate location and provide a brief description of the area in which the net was set ("Comments"). Gill nets should always be set at the lake outlet, if present and if conditions allow. If an outlet does not exist, or is located in an area that is difficult to net (water <2 m deep, log jams, etc.), set nets at the inlet. If an inlet is not present or is not suitable, set the net in a suitable location anywhere along the lake shore. If possible, choose an area that is 3-8 m deep.

Fish Data: If no fish were captured, write "no fish" across the fish portion of the data sheet. If fish were captured, record the species, length, and weight of all fish. Species abbreviations are given at the bottom of the data sheet. Measure fish using the vinyl tape laid out on the ground. Measure fish total lengths to the nearest mm. Weigh fish using a Pescola spring scale. Before weighing fish, ensure that all debris (small rocks, etc.) are removed from the fish. Use the 60g scale for all fish <100 g, and the 300g or 1000g scale for larger fish. Outliers may need to be weighed in parts.

All fish will need to be cut open to determine sex. If someone on your crew is able, also note the general contents of fish stomachs (e.g., chironomid pupae, terrestrial insects, etc.). If you encounter a lake that contains both fish and amphibians, look through the fish stomachs very carefully for amphibian remains. Female fish will have eggs ranging from very small (early) to large and flaccid (late, deflated looking). Make a check mark in the appropriate box for each female fish sampled.

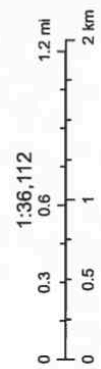
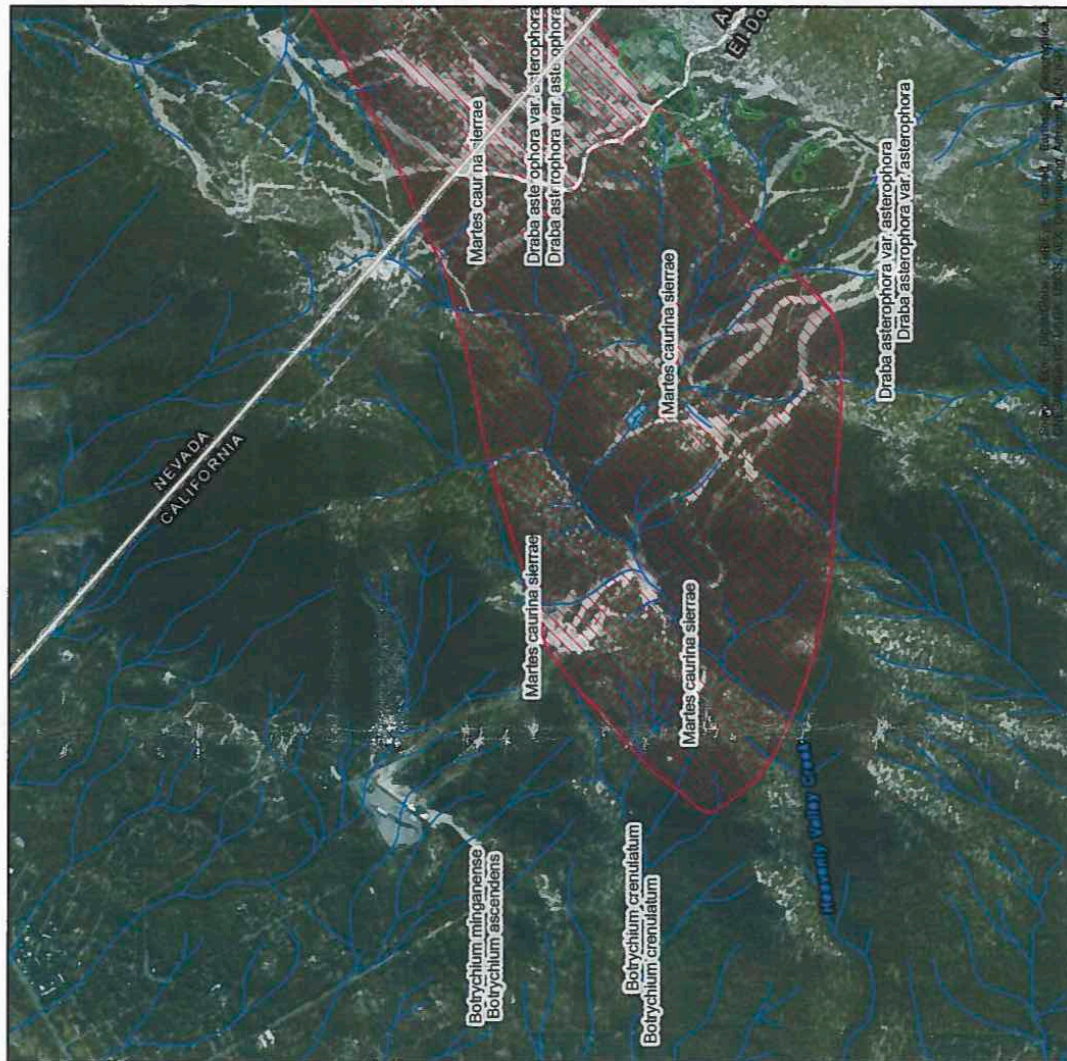
Be careful about disposing of fish carcasses, as we don't want the carcasses attracting the attention of backpackers or bears. The best disposal method is to pop the fish's swim-bladders, paddle out into the lake until you reach a relatively deep area, and dump them. Burial of fish on land should generally be avoided, as animals can smell the fish and will dig them up (no matter how deep you bury them).

Net sterilization: When moving to a different drainage or when one site does NOT flow into the next site gear (float tube, waders, fins and gill nets) must be sterilized. Sterilize using 5 ml of Quat 128 per 1.5 gallons of water (this gives 0.09% quat mixture). Gear must be soaked for at least 20 minutes and then dried for at least 20 minutes. Dispose of Quat 128 on rocks or soil away from waterways. Consider rinsing gear in water from the next survey site away from potential amphibian sites before next use.

Field review of datasheets/palm entries

At the end of each day, crew members should review each others datasheets/palm entries for completeness and clarity. For palm entries the reviewer should review each subform and complete the reviewer field with their name from the pick list. Once review of a datasheet is completed, the crew leader should initialize the field review box on pages 2 and 3 of the datasheets. Make sure all of the spaces on the data sheets have been filled in. These data sheets are all the state has to show for the time and money that went into each survey. Protect the data sheets as if they were your most prized possession!

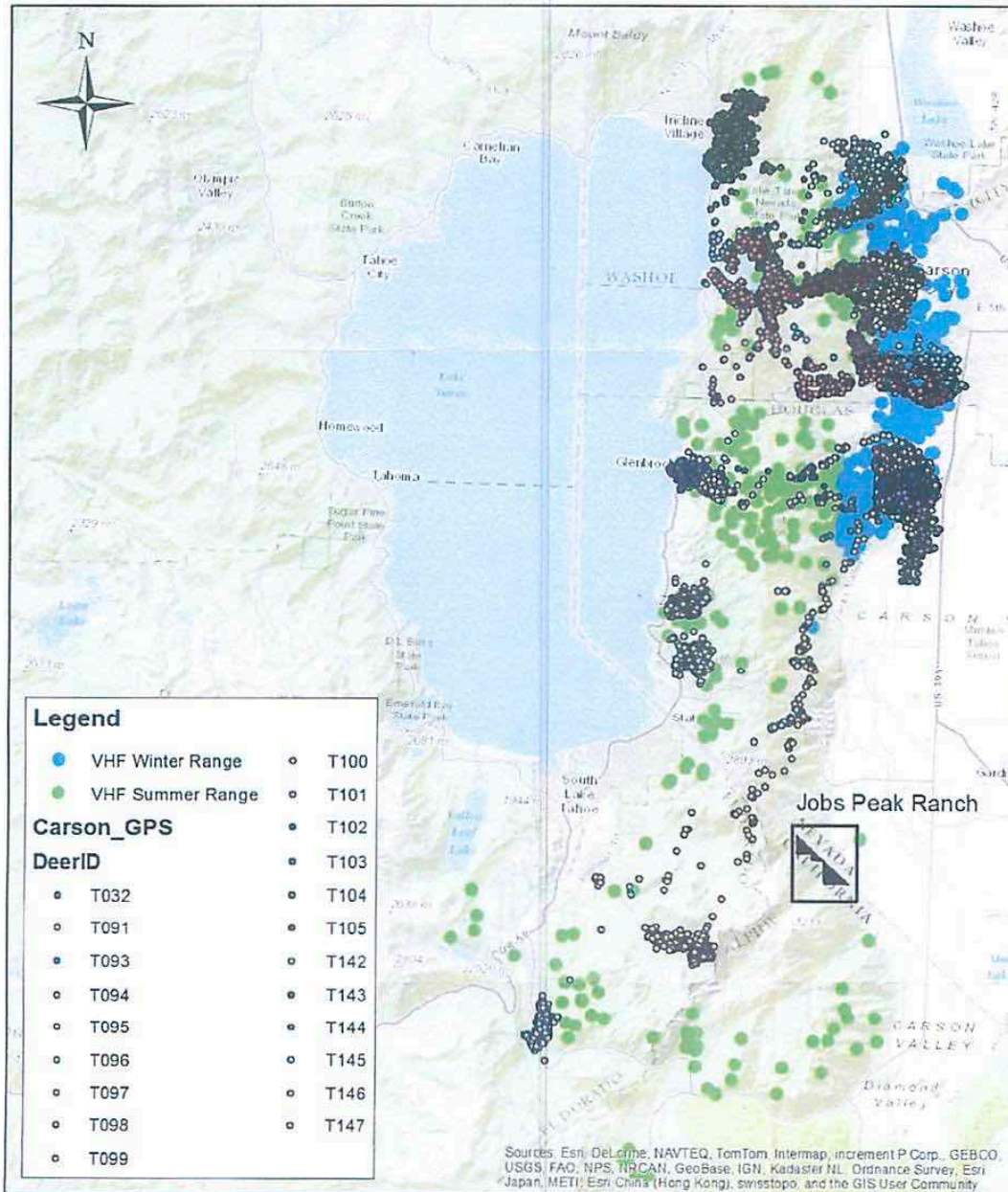
Map of Project Area



October 8, 2014

Author: acalderano
Printed from <http://bios.dfg.ca.gov>

Mule Deer VHF (104 individuals) and GPS (21 individuals)
locations between 2010-2014. Nevada Department of Wildlife.



- Comment 5-1 This comment summarizes the CEQA directives for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and their responsibilities as a trustee agency and responsible agency. This comment also summarizes the Project. This is not a comment on the content or adequacy of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. Please refer to the following responses to the specific comments in Comment Letter 5.
- Comment 5-2 The DEIR/EIS/EIS evaluates impacts from both construction and operations of the proposed facilities. Impact BIO-2 evaluates impacts to sensitive species as a result of implementation of the proposed project and operations. BIO-3 also evaluates impacts to migratory bird species through loss of nesting habitat as well as operations. Mitigation BIO-3 requires the annual breeding bird survey to alleviate impacts to migratory nesting birds from operational activities.
- Comment 5-3 Figures 3.9-1 and 3.9-2 have been added to the DEIR/EIS/EIS to identify the locations of Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog habitat and how it intersects with proposed project activities.
- Comment 5-4 DEIR/EIS/EIS Impact BIO-1 has been updated to include a discussion of impacts to SNYLF habitat that is present onsite. A total of three surveys have been performed within the mapped suitable habitat within the Project Area. The document states: *“Three surveys have been performed in the Sky Meadows Basin and East Peak Lake areas in 2013 (one survey) and 2014 (two surveys) by USFS personnel. No Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog were observed in either area or survey year. East Peak Lake supported sierran tree frog (Pseudacris sierra) adults and tadpoles in both surveys, while only Long-toed salamander (Ambystoma macrodactylum) was observed in the Sky Meadows Basin in the pond behind the California dam. Three surveys have been performed in the last 10 years, however USFS protocol has not been met to classify the habitat as Unutilized Potential in accordance with Region 5 direction (USDA 2014) due to the fact that one of the surveys did not occur within 3-5 weeks of snowmelt within a year where the winter snowpack was 80% or above normal. As one additional survey is required that meets these criteria, the existing suitable habitat is classified as Utilization Unknown.”*
- Comment 5-5 This discrepancy has been fixed and DEIR/EIS/EIS Table 3.9-1 now reflects there is suitable habitat within the project area. Figures 3.9-1 and 3.9-2 identify the locations of Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog habitat and how it intersects with proposed project activities.
- Comment 5-6 A discussion of increased human activities has been added to DEIR/EIS/EIS page 3.9-43: *“Increased human presence in the areas surrounding the suitable habitat for SNYLF will not have an impact on the species if present due to the controlled nature of access and where the public and staff will be allowed to be present. All walking and vehicle traffic will be confined to existing and proposed walkways that are outside the suitable habitat and located in the upland areas. No dispersed walking or hiking activities will be allowed in association with these projects in the vicinity of SNYLF habitat.”*
- Comment 5-7 DEIR/EIS/EIS Mitigation Measure BIO-1 has been updated to include consultation with CDFW and now includes the statement: *“If it is determined that protection measures cannot be implemented to reduce impacts to the species [SNYLF], each activity proposed in the delineated habitat area that will result in new disturbance*

and human interaction will be eliminated from the Project (e.g., Sky Basin Coaster, Sky Meadows Challenge Course, East Peak Lake Dock)."

- Comment 5-8 A discussion of great gray owls has been added to DEIR/EIS/EIS BIO-1: "*Great gray owl, a State of California Endangered Species, does not contain large amounts of suitable habitat within the project area. Great gray owls are strongly associated with meadows as this habitat type is used for hunting voles, gophers and other prey (Sears 2002) up to an elevation of 8,000 feet. Great gray owls tend to spend the majority of their time within 200 m of a meadow edge, within suitable habitat containing dense canopy cover, large trees and numerous snags. Breeding and wintering habitat is strongly correlated with healthy wet meadow systems (Van Riper and Wagtendonk. 2006). Great gray owls are also sensitive to human presence, as observed in Yosemite National Park (Van Riper and Wagtendonk. 2006).*
- The only wet meadow in the project area is located at Sky Meadows Basin, where the elevation is 8,500 feet and the area is heavily developed with the presence of a ski lodge, two lift base stations, a snowmaking pond and associated pump house and auxiliary buildings. Additionally, the meadow is bordered on three sides by existing roadways utilized all seasons for vehicle travel over the snow and summer usage. Due to the limited meadow area, existing level of disturbance in the Sky Meadow Basin and surrounding area and the high elevation of the proposed project (above the elevation range of great gray owls) the likelihood of great gray owls being present in the project area is extremely unlikely. As such, the project will not adversely affect this species."*
- Comment 5-9 The only two species that are covered by the California Endangered Species Act are the great gray owl and SNYLF. Refer to response to comment 5-8 above for a discussion of great gray owl and response to comment 5-7 for revised mitigation for SNYLF.
- Comment 5-10 DEIR/EIS/EIS Mitigation Measure BIO-3 has been modified to include the potential for increased avoidance zone/buffer as necessary to meet the demands of individual species. Additionally, annual surveys for nesting birds are included in the mitigation to prevent impacts on an ongoing basis.
- Comment 5-11 DEIR/EIS/EIS Mitigation Measure 7.4-10 (Avoid and/or Restore Future Disturbed Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands) has been amended to include the requirement to obtain a permit from CDFW for impacts to Section 1600 of the FGC that may result from removal of riparian vegetation.
- Comment 5-12 Refer to response to comment 4-4.
- Comment 5-13 Thank you for taking the time to review our project as well as the responses to your comments provided above

**Comment Letter 6 – Port, Patricia, United States Department of the Interior,
Pacific Southwest Region, 10/21/14**



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
Pacific Southwest Region
333 Bush Street, Suite 515
San Francisco, CA 94104

IN REPLY REFER TO:
(ER 14/0571)

Filed Electronically

21 October 2014

David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
128 Market Street
P.O. Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) USDA US Forest Service (USFS)
Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project, NV

Dear Mr. Landry:

1 The Department of the Interior has received and reviewed the subject document and has no
comments to offer.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project.

Sincerely,

PatriciaSandersonPort
Regional Environmental Officer

cc: OEPC-Staff Contact: Lisa Chetnik Treichel, (202) 208-7116; Lisa.Treichel@ios.doi.gov

Comment 6-1 Thank you for taking the time to review our project.

Comment Letter 7 – Thomaselli, Lauren, City of South Lake Tahoe, 10/23/14



City of South Lake Tahoe
"making a positive difference now"

October 23, 2014

To: David Landry, Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

From: Lauren Thomaselli, Recreation Manager
1180 Rufus Allen Blvd.
City of South Lake Tahoe, CA.

Re: Support for Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project

Dear Mr. Landry,

As the project manager for the first ever comprehensive parks, trails and recreation master plan being conducted in collaboration with El Dorado County, I am writing to express our support for the proposed Epic Discovery Project. Epic Discovery aligns beautifully with many of the recommendations identified in the South Lake Tahoe Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan currently in the final phase of development.

First, as a result of an extensive community engagement process four key elements were identified as important to expanding recreation opportunities all of which are evident in the proposed Epic Discovery Project. They include: Reflecting the needs and priorities of the community; Include strategies to sustain existing environmental assets and protect ecological resources; Identify recreation facilities and programs that will support tourism and the economic vitality of the region; Support, direct, and enhance recreation opportunities for both residents and visitors. Epic Discovery and SLT Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan both seek to strike a balance between these four key elements.

Secondly, consistently ranking as a top priority for residents and visitors is a desire for better trails, connectivity to recreation amenities, and bike park additions. Epic Discovery proposes a mountain bike park complete with connecting trail systems. The City is proposing additional trail connections and a bike park in Bijou Community Park as part of the recreation master plan priority projects. These are only a few examples of how two completely separate recreation plans are very much complimentary in project planning priorities and in meeting community needs and desires with a common goal to enhance the recreation experience for residents and visitors.

Finally, Epic Discovery proposes nature trails and interpretive programs consistent with our master plan findings indicating the largest visitor market to South Lake Tahoe is

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looking for low impact nature activities. Experiences such as those proposed by Heavenly not only meet this demand but serve to connect visitors with the land in a way that inspires stewardship and a sense of place that is unique. Ultimately memorable nature experiences create a triple bottom line benefiting the environment, the economy and the quality of life for residents by generating tax dollars for infrastructure improvements.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this very worthwhile project and express support on behalf of the City of South Lake Tahoe and El Dorado County Project Core Team for the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan.

Sincerely,



Lauren Thomaselli, Recreation Manager

Comment 7-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 8 – Wright, Patrick, California Tahoe Conservancy, 10/27/14



October 27, 2014

David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
128 Market Street
Stateline Nevada, 89449

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NORMA SANTIAGO
El Dorado County

NANCY J. GIBSON
U.S. Forest Service (ex-officio)

PATRICK WRIGHT
Executive Director

Comments on Draft EIR/EIS/EIS for the Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project

Dear Mr. Landry,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Heavenly Mountain Resort (HMR) Epic Discovery Project. In general, the Conservancy applauds Heavenly's intent to establish interconnected trails within the Tahoe Basin. However, we share the concerns of the Nevada Division of State Lands (NDSL) and Nevada Division of State Parks (NVSP) that the project could adversely impact the visitor experience and exceed the capacity of the facilities at Van Sickle Bi-State Park (VSBSP). These concerns are outlined below.

Visitor Experience:

We are concerned that the project may not be consistent with the purposes and visitor experience for which Van Sickle Bi-State Park was established. As described in the Conservancy Staff Recommendation to provide funding to establish the Park,

"This bi-state park complements the nearby and Conservancy-funded Explore Tahoe Urban Trailhead, affording visitors to the area the opportunity to walk from their hotel rooms to short day outings, long hikes, and cultural elements which showcase both Nevada's and California's heritage. The historic structures located around the proposed day use area add to the park's amenities as the primary features of interest and will be the central draw for interpretive purposes."

The project will likely change the nature and quality of the existing VSBSP experience, particularly on the Connector Trail, from one enjoyed by low-intensity trail users (hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers) to one which is lift assisted with a use focused on high-intensity downhill access. This impact has not been adequately addressed.

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phone: 530-542-5580 fax: 530-542-5567 e-mail: info@tahoe.ca.gov web: www.tahoe.ca.gov

Capacity:

- 3 | VSBSP, its facilities, and its trail systems were not constructed to accommodate the volume of users and impacts potentially generated from lift-assisted mountain bike use. The high volumes of downhill mountain bikers that exceed trail design and purpose, and the increase in trail maintenance, facilities maintenance, and/or the potential need for facility expansion as a result of the proposed project must be evaluated and potentially mitigated.

User Conflicts:

- 4 | We are concerned that the project may create significant conflicts among users of the VSBSP trail system. For example, the Nevada trailhead was constructed primarily to serve equestrian users. The potential impacts of user conflicts, user safety and off-trail impacts, such as jumps and user-created trails, should be addressed.

Parking/Transportation:

- 5 | Since the VSCT can be used to access the Panorama Trail and other amenities of HMR, it must be assumed that some users will drive to and park in VSBSP to access or end the day at HMR. VSBSP parking lots were intentionally undersized to promote non-vehicular entrance to the park from the largest bed base in the Tahoe Basin. VSBSP contains 14 parking spaces on the California side (including one ADA space) and 32 on the Nevada side (including two ADA and six equestrian trailer spaces). Therefore, the impact of the expected additional demand for parking on VSBSP and its access points, including those at Saddle and Adams Way, and at the Village Center shopping Center, must be assessed.

State of Nevada Specific Comments

We want to emphasize the following specific comments from NVSP:

- 6 | • *Page 3.13-25, first paragraph:* "The recreational experience of these trails would be similar to that on hiking and mountain biking trails throughout NFS lands."
NVSP/CTC comment: This may be an inaccurate supposition, as NFS trails generally do not have lift assisted access.
- 7 | • *Page 3.13-26, fourth paragraph:* "With full build out of the proposed activities, the proposed action is anticipated to result in approximately 50,000 new summer visitors to HMR."
NVSP/CTC comment: Will the Panorama Trail be subject to capacity limits similar to other proposed activities? Will adjacent impacted properties/facilities have a role in determining these capacity limits?

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phone: 530-542-5580 fax: 530-542-5567 e-mail: info@tahoe.ca.gov web: www.tahoe.ca.gov

- 8 • *Page 3.13-27, third paragraph:* "This trail (Panorama) would provide an additional access point to the Tahoe Rim Trail and the network of mountain trails surrounding Heavenly's SUP and would create lift access and numerous loop opportunities, thereby increasing use of existing recreational resources." **and** "As a central access point...the improvement of trail resources at HMR would likely have a positive impact on recreation in the area so long as monitoring, maintenance and operations adjust to the additional use."
- NVSP/CTC comment:* Once these trails are open to this type of access/use, it will be very difficult to change that access/use pattern, permissible or otherwise. As they pertain to impacts to VSBSP, mitigation options need to be identified, evaluated and incorporated into the final project design, with the approval of NDSP and the Conservancy.
- 9 • *Page 3.13-28, first paragraph:* "a large volume of local use is anticipated" **and** "The greatest increase is anticipated on the proposed Panorama Trail and existing Van Sickle Connector Trail. This is the most direct route from the top of the Gondola to the base of the Gondola and nearly entirely downhill."
- NVSP/CTC Comment:* The existing Tahoe Rim Connector Trail was never intended to accommodate the volume of users and impacts potentially generated by lift-assisted mountain bike use, which would result from the proposed project.
- 10 • *Page 3.13-28, third paragraph:* "Increased use of the Van Sickle Connector Trail is anticipated as many intermediate to advanced riders in the proposed mountain bike park would likely choose to ride down to Heavenly Village via this trail rather than downloading in the Gondola." **and** "Lift access to the top of the Van Sickle Connector could also attract downhill mountain bikers"
- NVSP/CTC Comment:* The existing Tahoe Rim Connector Trail was never intended to accommodate the volume of users and impacts potentially generated by lift-assisted mountain bike use, which would result from the proposed project.
- 11 *Page 3.13-32, CEQA section.*
NDSP/NVSP/CTC Comment: Revise language to "will result in additional use of the Van Sickle Connector"; "could" does not represent the potential for impact on this section of trail.
- 12 • *Page 3.13-33, NEPA section:* "However, any additional use of the Tahoe Rim Trail and/or Van Sickle Connector Trail resulting from the proposed projects would be consistent with the intended use and management of these trails and is not anticipated to degrade the recreational experience."
- NVSP/CTC Comment:* The existing Tahoe Rim Connector Trail was not intended to accommodate the volume of users and impacts potentially generated by lift-assisted mountain bike use, which would result from the proposed project. Based on the above comments, there may be adverse effects.

- 13 • *Page 3.13-35, CEQA/TRPA Analysis:* "Additionally, the recreational experience on these trails would be monitored and if a reduction in the quality of the experience or degradation of the facility were observed, improvements would be required."
- NVSP/CTC Comment:* As they pertain to impacts to VSBSP, mitigation options need to be identified, evaluated and incorporated into the final project design, with the approval of NDSP and the Conservancy.
- 14 • *Page 3.13-35, CEQA/TRPA Analysis:* "The MP 96 Final EIR/EIS/EIS and MPA 07 Final EIR/EIS/EIS did not identify the needs for new parks or recreational facilities as a result of the MP buildout. Therefore new or expanded park facilities would not be required to serve new direct or indirect population growth for the proposed action of action alternatives."
- NVSP/CTC Comment:* Construction of the proposed Panorama Trail will have an effect on the facilities at Van Sickle Bi-State Park, including restrooms, day use facilities, and parking. Therefore, NDSP and the Conservancy anticipate that new or expanded facilities will be required to serve the expanded use within the park that will occur as a direct result of the proposed project. This need, however, may or may not be related to population growth.

Other Specific Comments and Questions:

- 15 • The Heavenly Special Use Permit (SUP) boundary is misrepresented in the document and should only include lands owned by the USDA Forest Service and should not include lands owned by the states of California and Nevada.
- 16 • Does the proposed project and/or mitigation plan include maintenance/other operational needs on affected properties that are not within Heavenly's SUP but will be impacted by these proposed operations?
- 17 • Were alternatives considered without the Panorama Trail or a contained loop trail system within the SUP boundary?
- 18 • Will special events be held as a result of the Epic Discovery Project and the connected trails by Heavenly or another party? If so, how will these events affect VSBSP and its current users? These questions need to be addressed in final project design and environmental effects analysis for this EIR/EIS/EIS.

1061 Third Street, South Lake Tahoe, California 96150
phone: 530-542-5580 fax: 530-542-5567 e-mail: info@tahoe.ca.gov web: www.tahoe.ca.gov

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project. We look forward to participating in the next steps of the Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Wright', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patrick Wright
Executive Director

1061 Third Street, South Lake Tahoe, California 96150
phone: 530-542-5580 fax: 530-542-5567 e-mail: info@tahoe.ca.gov web: www.tahoe.ca.gov

- Comment 8-1 Thank you for taking the time to review our project. Please refer to the following detailed responses and references to identical comments raised by NDSP to the specific comments included in your letter regarding impacts to existing trails and facilities at Van Sickle Bi-State Park.
- Comment 8-2 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 8-3 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 8-4 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 8-5 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 8-6 Refer to the response to Comment 3-27.
- Comment 8-7 Refer to the response to Comment 3-29 and Master Response 1.
- Comment 8-8 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 8-9 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 8-10 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 8-11 Refer to the response to Comment 3-35 and Master Response 1.
- Comment 8-12 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 8-13 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 8-14 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.
- Comment 8-15 Refer to the responses to comments 3-7 and 3-23.
- Comment 8-16 Access for the Epic Discovery Project, including the emergency evacuation route and Panorama trail construction and maintenance would be provided through existing roads located on National Forest Service lands.
- Comment 8-17 Refer to response to comment 3-2 regarding alternatives without the Panorama Trail or contained loop trail system within the SUP boundary.
- Comment 8-18 Special events are not proposed as part of the Project and therefore were not analyzed in the DEIR/EIS/EIS. If special events are proposed in the future, additional review, including an opportunity for public input, will occur at that time and a separate special use permit would be issued for such events.

Comment Letter 9 – Goforth, Kathleen, United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX, 10/28/14



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

October 28, 2014

RECEIVED

OCT 31 2014

TAHOE REGIONAL
PLANNING AGENCY

Mr. Matt Dickinson
NEPA Contract Coordinator
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, National Forest Service
35 College Drive
South Lake Tahoe, California 96150

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, Douglas Nevada & El Dorado and Alpine Counties, California. (CEQ# 20140243)

Dear Mr. Dickinson:

1 The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. Our review is provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and our NEPA review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The project would diversify year-round, non-skiing recreational opportunities at Heavenly Mountain Resort, primarily for summertime users. The project proposes to use primarily preexisting infrastructure, such as a parking garage, ski lifts and guest service facilities, to expand summer activities. The project also calls for tree removal for trails and emergency snow cat evacuation routes for the gondola. We appreciate that the project includes mitigation measures and design features incorporated into the proposed action.

2 The EPA has rated the Preferred Alternative as Lack of Objections-LO (see enclosed "Summary of Rating Definitions"). We support the best management practices and resource protection measures included in the project design. We recommend that the FEIS incorporate additional continued bio-
3 assessment monitoring of the three existing sites along Heavenly Valley Creek as well as the "control" site on Hidden Valley Creek until an improving trend can be definitively documented, as suggested by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, and commit to any necessary mitigation measures needed should the project result in adverse impacts to the streams.

4 We also recommend that the FEIS include an updated annual average daily traffic or AADT volume that includes 2012-2013 data. The roadways analyses in Section 3.7.1.3 of the DEIS rely on 2003 to 2011 data. The effects of the Great Recession from 2008-2011, which adversely affected the local gaming and hospitality industries, may skew the data, thus depicting an AADT that fails to reflect current conditions. (For more information, go to: <http://www.cityofslt.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/126>.) We note that the appendices include raw data through December 2013 that were not incorporated into the AADT used in the DEIS. By including data from 2012-2013, the Forest Service could more precisely determine roadway congestion and transportation impacts of the project. The findings of an updated AADT could

- 4 also be used to get a clearer picture of current public parking capacity to absorb the projected growth from this project. Given that the purpose stated in the DEIS for this project is to increase summertime activities, e.g. tourism, we recommend that the Forest Service also include in the FEIS an updated Traffic Count study that looks specifically at summertime roadway congestion and transportation impacts to confirm formula results.
- 5 Thank you for the opportunity to review this DEIS. We appreciate the Forest Service's coordination with us via phone calls during our review. When the FEIS is released, please send one hard copy and one CD to the address above (mail code: ENF-4-2). If you have any questions, please contact me at (415) 972-3521, or have your staff contact James Munson, the lead reviewer for this project. Mr. Munson can be reached at (415) 972-3852 or Munson.James@epa.gov.

Sincerely,


For Kathleen Martyn Goforth, Manager
Environmental Review Section

Enclosure: Summary of the EPA Rating System

Cc: California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

SUMMARY OF EPA RATING DEFINITIONS*

This rating system was developed as a means to summarize the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) level of concern with a proposed action. The ratings are a combination of alphabetical categories for evaluation of the environmental impacts of the proposal and numerical categories for evaluation of the adequacy of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE ACTION

"LO" (Lack of Objections)

The EPA review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the proposal. The review may have disclosed opportunities for application of mitigation measures that could be accomplished with no more than minor changes to the proposal.

"EC" (Environmental Concerns)

The EPA review has identified environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment. Corrective measures may require changes to the preferred alternative or application of mitigation measures that can reduce the environmental impact. EPA would like to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

"EO" (Environmental Objections)

The EPA review has identified significant environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to provide adequate protection for the environment. Corrective measures may require substantial changes to the preferred alternative or consideration of some other project alternative (including the no action alternative or a new alternative). EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

"EU" (Environmentally Unsatisfactory)

The EPA review has identified adverse environmental impacts that are of sufficient magnitude that they are unsatisfactory from the standpoint of public health or welfare or environmental quality. EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts. If the potentially unsatisfactory impacts are not corrected at the final EIS stage, this proposal will be recommended for referral to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

ADEQUACY OF THE IMPACT STATEMENT

Category "1" (Adequate)

EPA believes the draft EIS adequately sets forth the environmental impact(s) of the preferred alternative and those of the alternatives reasonably available to the project or action. No further analysis or data collection is necessary, but the reviewer may suggest the addition of clarifying language or information.

Category "2" (Insufficient Information)

The draft EIS does not contain sufficient information for EPA to fully assess environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment, or the EPA reviewer has identified new reasonably available alternatives that are within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which could reduce the environmental impacts of the action. The identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussion should be included in the final EIS.

Category "3" (Inadequate)

EPA does not believe that the draft EIS adequately assesses potentially significant environmental impacts of the action, or the EPA reviewer has identified new, reasonably available alternatives that are outside of the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which should be analyzed in order to reduce the potentially significant environmental impacts. EPA believes that the identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussions are of such a magnitude that they should have full public review at a draft stage. EPA does not believe that the draft EIS is adequate for the purposes of the NEPA and/or Section 309 review, and thus should be formally revised and made available for public comment in a supplemental or revised draft EIS. On the basis of the potential significant impacts involved, this proposal could be a candidate for referral to the CEQ.

*From EPA Manual 1640, Policy and Procedures for the Review of Federal Actions Impacting the Environment.

- Comment 9-1 The EPA summarizes components and benefits of the Project and states the United States EPA has had the opportunity to review the DEIR/EIS/EIS and comment. This is not a comment on the content or adequacy of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. This information is passed on to the Project proponent and decision makers for consideration.
- Comment 9-2 The comment states the EPA has rated the Preferred Alternative as Lack of Objections and the EPA supports the best management practices and resource protection measures included in the project design. This rating indicates the EPA has not identified impacts requiring substantive changes. This information is passed on to the Project proponent and decision makers for consideration.
- Comment 9-3 As required by the existing Waste Discharge Requirements issued by the Lahontan Board, bio-assessment monitoring will continue within Heavenly Valley and Hidden Valley Creeks to assess the effectiveness of sediment reduction measures required as part of the Heavenly Master Plan implementation.
- Comment 9-4 Refer to Master Response 2 for additional discussion of the transportation impact analysis.
- Comment 9-5 This comment provides contact information for the commenter. This is not a comment on the content or adequacy of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. This information is passed on to the Project proponent and decision makers for consideration.

7.4 RESPONSES TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Three letters were received from stakeholders:

- 10. Bennington, Mary, Tahoe Rim Trail Association, 10/20/14
- 11. Fish, Ben, Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association, 10/27/14
- 12. Ames, Laurel, Tahoe Area Sierra Club, 11/2/14

Comment Letter 10 – Bennington, Mary, Tahoe Rim Trail Association, 10/20/14



TAHOE RIM TRAIL
HIKING, MOUNTAIN BIKING, HORSEBACK RIDING
ASSOCIATION

"a trail like no other"

David Landry
TRPA Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
128 Market Street
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449-5310

Dear David Landry:

- 1 The Board of Directors (Board) of the Tahoe Rim Trail Association (TRTA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Heavenly Epic Discovery Project and wish to take this opportunity to provide comments. The following comments are focused on recreational aspects in the EIS and more specifically how this proposed project will impact the Tahoe Rim Trail (TRT) and its connecting system trails.
- 2 The Board would first like to express their support for rerouting the Tahoe Rim Trail off Mott Canyon Road. Currently this section of trail is a low point for many trail users. The TRTA office frequently fields calls from trail users complaining about traveling on this dirt road, getting lost in the area, and the steep grades. Rerouting the Tahoe Rim Trail off of Mott Canyon Road will improve trail user experience for all trail users.
- 3 The Board would like to see the EIS reflect that if the Panorama Trail is routed onto the TRT and around Mott Canyon Road the language and maps are clear that that new section of trail is the Tahoe Rim Trail and not the Panorama Trail and would therefore be built to TRT standards. See attached map for clarification on our concerns. The current draft implies that 1,100ft of the TRT will be replaced with the Panorama Trail.
- 4 Secondly, the Tahoe Rim Trail Association has already seen a significant increase in use on the Tahoe Rim Trail and its connecting trails this year. While the draft EIS states that if impacts on user experience and existing trails are experienced, mitigation steps will be taken to restore and/or maintain a high quality recreational experience. The Board feels it is not a question of 'if'. These trails will be heavily impacted, user conflicts will significantly increase, and there will be an incredible burden placed on the

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RECEIVED

OCT 20 2014

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PLANNING AGENCY



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ASSOCIATION

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- 4 USFS and local nonprofits to mitigate these impacts on trails outside of the Heavenly project borders e.g. Star Lake. While the Board generally supports the Epic Discovery project and the concept of increasing summer recreational opportunities in the Tahoe Basin, we would like to see a more clearly defined plan for shared responsibility for costs associated with maintaining and reconstructing sections of the TRT and its connecting trails most heavily impacted by this project.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. If you require any further information from the Tahoe Rim Trail Association please do not hesitate to contact me at maryb@tahoerimtrail.org or by phone at 775-298-4486.

Sincerely,

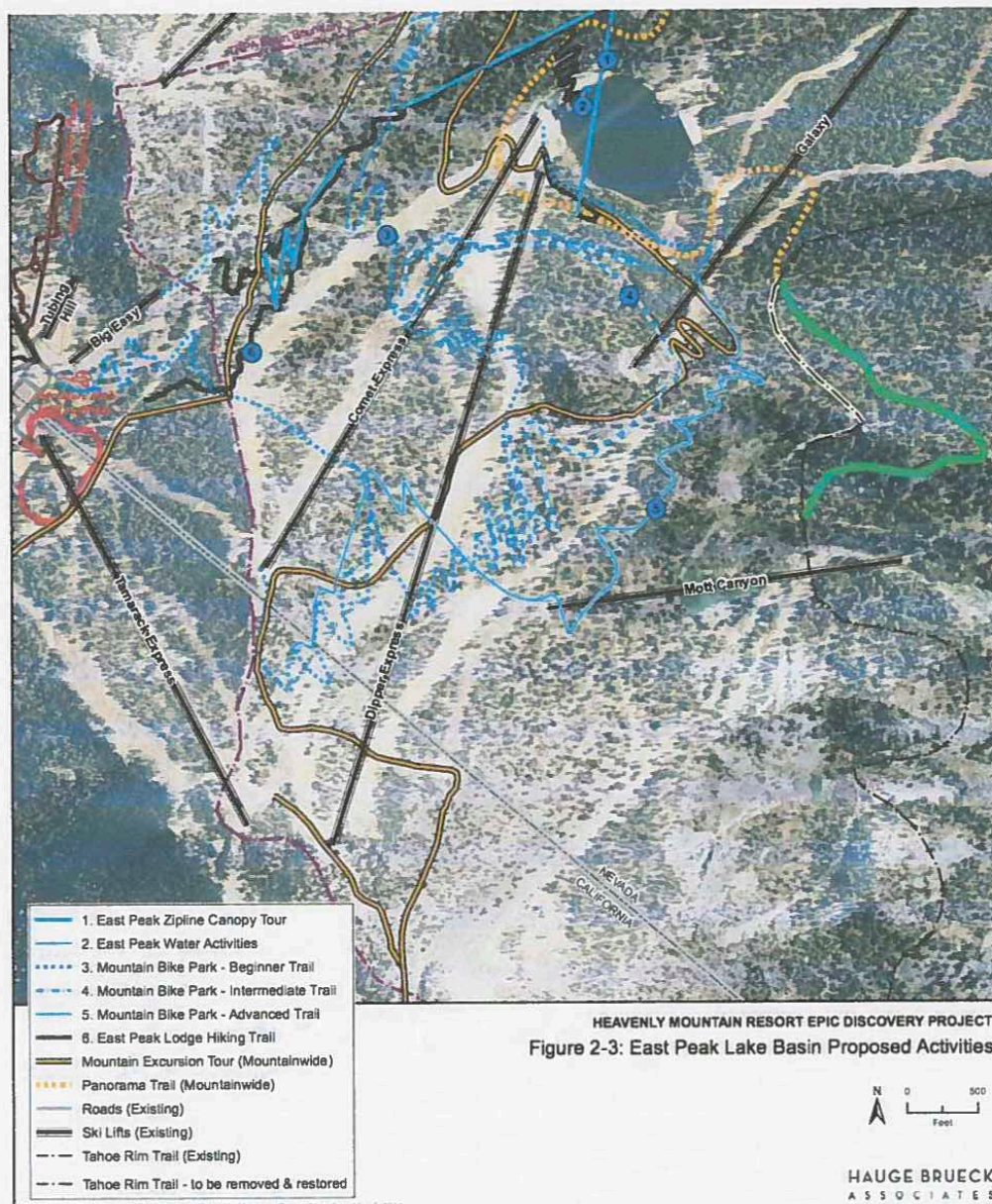
Mary Bennington
Executive Director
Tahoe Rim Trail Association

Enclosure

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The TRTA Board recommends the revision of Panorama Trail distances and maps within the draft EIS to reflect that any part of the Tahoe Rim Trail (TRT) that is rerouted to avoid the Mott Canyon Road will be the TRT and not Panorama Trail and therefore be managed in a manner consistent with the TRT Management Plan and TMOs. The TRT recommends including another item in the map key for 'rerouted section of the Tahoe Rim Trail'. The section in question is highlighted above in green.

- Comment 10-1 This comment provides an introduction to the comment letter. Please refer to the following responses to comments.
- Comment 10-2 The comment expresses support for rerouting the Tahoe Rim Trail off Mott Canyon Road. The USFS and Heavenly Mountain Resort acknowledge that the rerouted segment will be the Tahoe Rim Trail, and not the Panorama Trail, and will be managed by the Tahoe Rim Trail Association, with Heavenly's support.
- Comment 10-3 The description of the changes proposed to the TRT under the Epic Discovery Project has been revised to clarify that the trail realignment near the Galaxy and Mott Canyon lifts will be considered the TRT and built to TRT standards.
- Comment 10-4 Refer to Master Response 1 for a discussion of potential trail conflicts.

**Comment Letter 11 – Fish, Ben, Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association,
10/27/14**

October 27, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

Dear Mr. Landry:

HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT AND DRAFT EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS

- 1 The Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association (TAMBA) supports Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project and specifically the mountain bike trail connectors and bike park. We agree with the stated Purpose & Need for the proposed project. We have reviewed the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS and agree with the conclusions reached in the document.

The project will make the best use of existing on mountain infrastructure within the existing footprint of the resort for the greater good of the public. As a volunteer organization that advocates for more and better recreation based around mountain biking we have heard the overwhelming support from our members for this project.

Many TAMBA members will travel to Tahoe specifically to help build and ride trails, this offers them a unique experience to engage with the Forest not offered in many other places. The Epic Discovery Project will allow easier access to a greater number of people in a mountain environment. What we've seen is that the more people who are engaged in the forest breeds new stewardship. This connects people to the land and in turn protects the natural resources.

We have seen a steady increase of recreation based visitors to Tahoe including more families looking for high caliber outdoor activities. TAMBA believes this project will help satisfy the demand. The project will be a benefit to both visitors and residents of our community. It is consistent with the goals of the Forest Service, TRPA's Regional Plan Update and the local area plans by providing high quality public outdoor recreation.

A few specific comments TAMBA has on the plan include:

- 2 ▪ Creation of the Panorama Trail should be a top priority. The trail will provide much needed connections to the Rim Trail at Mott Canyon (rerouting the steep dirt road that exists there now) to Monument Pass and Heavenly. The lake side connection of the Panorama Trail will provide another much needed connection to the City of South Lake Tahoe and the bed base at Stateline connecting into the existing Van Sickle Trail. Currently Heavenly is a black hole for public trails, void of multi-use trails and this public connection is greatly needed. It will connect the town to the mountains better.
- 3 ▪ The approval of events, such as races and festivals, should be included in the approval of the project. The USFS should include mountain bike events in the NEPA process for approval.

- 4 | ▪ The bike park should be considered for future expansion with popularity, eventually even to the base areas of Stagecoach and/or California Base Lodge.

- 5 | Not only will the project provide environmental benefits, but it will be a huge boost to the local economy and provide more year round jobs. Heavenly has a proven track record of providing high quality public recreation and environmental protection; this project could not be in better hands to be implemented.

Thank you for taking our comments into consideration and allowing TAMBA to share our thoughts on this very existing project. Please share our input with all other approval agencies.

Sincerely,

Ben Fish
President, Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association (TAMBA)

PO Box 13712
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151
Email: president@mountainbiketahoe.org

- Comment 11-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 11-2 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 11-3 Special events are not proposed.. If special events are proposed in the future, additional review will occur at that time and a separate special use permit would be issued for such events.
- Comment 11-4 The commenter expresses an opinion on an action outside of what is proposed for the Project. This is not a comment on the content or adequacy of the DEIR/EIS. This information is passed on to the Project proponent and decision makers for consideration. No further response to this comment in relation to the DEIR/EIS is warranted.
- Comment 11-5 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 12 – Ames, Laurel, Tahoe Area Sierra Club, 11/2/14



Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
128 Market Street
Stateline, NV 89449

Dear Mr. David Landry,
Re: Heavenly Mountain Resort Valley Epic Discovery Project

Please accept The Tahoe Area Sierra Club comments regarding the Epic Discovery Project.

- 1 This document appears to be premature, due to the lack of studies and reports to support
2 mitigation measures. The failure to provide for summertime traffic and transit solutions and the
3 failure to adequately protect the white bark pine habitat and yellow legged frog habitat precludes
4 the decision to publish the final EIR.
- 4 We are particularly concerned with the discussion of traffic issues in the wintertime and
 the failure to discuss in any detail the summer vehicle trips, parking issues and air quality
 impacts at the Heavenly Village Gondola. The executive summary states that all access will be
 from the Heavenly village Gondola and no access from the main lodge. HMR is projecting
 110,000 visitors for the summer, all arriving and departing from this one point. That includes 550
 visitors a day and 1000 on a peak day. Table 3.7-7. The Traffic and transportation section is
 focused disproportionately on the Ski Run Blvd and Main Lodge areas. A reference to transit to
 and from the Heavenly Village are voiced in the conditional and offers no mitigation or
 commitment to alleviate new summer traffic generated by the Epic Discovery project. We
 recommend that Heavenly commits to operating a summer shuttle to offset the increased
 visitation. We also recommend prior to release of the final that the transportation section focuses
 only on the summer months. It is inappropriate to include the numerous paragraphs on winter
 transportation.
- 5 We strongly support increased recreational opportunities at Heavenly, especially those
 that are related to the natural environment of the Tahoe Basin. Hiking, mountain biking and rope
 courses are all physical activities that are appropriate for the site. The Forest Flyer Coaster and
 the Sky Basin coaster are more appropriate for an amusement park and intrude on the eco-
 system. The large metal rails, the 20 foot height and the 20-25 foot wide swath under the tracks
 do not provide the natural recreational mountain experience. This is like a roller coaster, which
 is not permitted on forest service land. In addition, the coasters are a direct example of a
 recreational facility that is out of place and “do not reflect their place within the natural and
 cultural landscape.” [Forest Service Built Environment Image Guide] We recommend
 eliminating the coasters as they are inappropriate for a mountain recreation facility. We also
 recommend the removal of the mock forest look-out and the four wheel drive tours. A real look-
 out is already accessible by car on Angora Ridge Road.
- 6 We are concerned about the Scenic impacts of any construction on the ridge which will
 be seen from Lake Tahoe and other natural and hiking areas including Freel Peak.
 We request that the scenic element section be revised to include a more robust discussion.

- 7 We are also concerned about any impacts on the White Bark Pine. Due to its fragile nature and the findings from the Fish and Wildlife Service even a 1% impact at this point could trigger a rapid decline. We recommend no White Bark Pine Trees should be removed.
- Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the important document. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. We look forward to participating in any further discussions.

Laurel Ames
Tahoe Area Sierra Club
Conservation Committee
530-541-5752

- Comment 12-1 This comment expresses an opinion on the DEIR/EIS/EIS and a general statement regarding studies and reports to support the analysis and mitigation measures. The comment does not indicate which studies or reports are missing and no further response can be made. No further response to this comment in relation to the DEIR/EIS/EIS is warranted. Please refer to the following responses to this comment letter.
- Comment 12-2 Refer to Master Response 2 for additional discussion of the transportation analysis.
- Comment 12-3 Potential impacts to Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog are discussed in DEIR/EIS/EIS Impact BIO-1. A total of three surveys have been performed resulting in no detections for the species. No direct impacts to the meadow or stream habitat will occur as a result of the proposed project. An additional survey will be required prior to project implementation to successfully meet protocol. Additional language was added to DEIR/EIS/EIS Mitigation Measure BIO-1 to require the removal of an activity should it result in significant and unavoidable impacts: “If it is determined that protection measures cannot be implemented to reduce impacts to the species, each activity proposed in the delineated habitat area that will result in new disturbance and human interaction will be eliminated from the Project (e.g., Sky Basin Coaster, Sky Meadows Challenge Course, East Peak Lake Dock).”

DEIR/EIS/EIS Impact VEG-3 outlines impacts to whitebark pine. As noted in the analysis, direct and indirect effects to whitebark pine will occur as a result of Epic Discovery Project implementation. These effects are considered less than significant because: a) The scale of direct effects is relatively small (14.84 acres in Proposed Action and Alternative 2; 16.64 acres in Alternative 1) compared to the extent of whitebark pine within the analysis area (3,737 acres) and the Lake Tahoe Basin (less than 1% acreage removal of both mixed and whitebark pine dominant stands); b) the indirect effects are relatively low (e.g. increased chances of wildfire and expansion of diseases); and c) the proposed activities will not result in the increase of the threat factors to whitebark pine. Adverse effects will result to the population of whitebark pine through the direct removal of 14.84 acres (Proposed Action and Alternative 2)

and 16.64 acres (Alternative 1). Cumulatively, these effects are not expected to result in a loss of species viability or accelerate federal listing.

- Comment 12-4 Refer to Master Response 2 for additional discussion of the transportation impact analysis. Air quality impacts resulting from Project operations are addressed in Chapter 3.5. Table 3.5-16 in Section 3.5-5.7 presents operation assumptions based on the operation season and the traffic analysis provided in Chapter 3.7, Section 3.7.4.1, including daily employee and visitor trips, VMT, vehicle speeds, the number of days and hours of operation, travel distance, anticipated number of vehicle, among other factors. Please note that the analysis is based on 1000 visitors per day on a peak day, as shown in Table 3.5-16. Using these assumptions, the analysis in Section 3.5-5.8 and Tables 3.5-17 and 3.5-18 identify project daily operation emissions as less than significant. Long-term annual operation impacts on air quality are less than significant as discussed in Section 3.5-5.9 and in Tables 3.5-19 and 3.5-20.
- Comment 12-5 In November 2011, the Ski Area Recreational Opportunity Enhancement Act (SAROE) was signed into law. The SAROE provides authority for the Forest Service to approve facilities and activities within ski area SUP boundaries to support summer and year-round natural resource-based recreation, in addition to snow sports, which were authorized by previous laws. On April 17, 2014, the Forest Service released its Final Directives for Additional Seasonal and Year-Round Recreation Activities at Ski Areas. Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2343.14 includes final direction and criteria to help authorized officers determine whether proposals for these activities are consistent with SAROE and the Final Directives. FSM 2343.14(1) includes criteria for evaluating additional seasonal and year-round recreation activities and associated facilities that may be authorized at ski areas. All proposed projects and activities have been screened against criteria at FSM 2343.14, and the screen is included in the DEIS and FEIS Appendix 3.13-A. The coasters, OHV tours and observation tower were determined to be appropriate for NFS lands within Heavenly's SUP area, given (among other things) their specific locations and designs. The presence of a lookout tower on Angora Ridge Road near Fallen Leaf Lake, or elsewhere in the Lake Tahoe Basin, does not preclude the inclusion of an observation tower in the Project under FSM 2343.14. The proposed observation tower will support project objectives for interpretive education.
- Comment 12-6 Visual impacts, including offsite impacts, are addressed in Chapter 3.10 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. A viewshed analysis was conducted to determine potential offsite visibility. Figures 3.10-2 through 3.10-4 (pages 3.10-3 through 3.10-5) illustrate potential visibility of proposed facilities. As shown in the figures some of the proposed facilities may be visible from the lake, the South Tahoe area, and from different locations on the mountain. The impact analysis on pages 3.10-13 through 3.10-34 find that no significant impact would occur. Although some visibility would occur, distance and intervening topography and trees reduce the visibility to a less than significant level. As shown in the viewshed analysis and impact analysis, the discussion includes impacts on views from the lake, the Tahoe Rim Trail, and urban and natural areas within the greater project area. Since the comment expresses concern over visual impacts, but does not indicate where the analysis is inadequate or incorrect, no further response can be made.
- Comment 12-7 Refer to response to comment 12-3.

7.5 RESPONSES TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

Forty-five letters were received from the public:

13. Thomas, Ralph, 8/28/14
14. von Hurwitz, Lon, 9/5/14
15. Ribaud, Carl, SMG, 9/17/14
16. Humphries, Phil, 9/23/14
17. Waller, Ellie, 9/24/14
18. O Bray, Perry, 9/26/14
19. Tevlin, Sean, 9/26/14
20. Garrison, Dan, Resorts West, 10/7/14
21. Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, Tahoe South, 10/9/14
22. Koster, John, Harrah's/Harveys Lake Tahoe, 10/10/14
23. Murillo, Kindred, Lake Tahoe Community College District, 10/13/14
24. Ronan, Patrick, Tahoe Lakeshore Lodge and Spa, 10/13/14
25. Tahoe Douglas Visitors Authority, 10/14/14
26. Hollingsworth, Tamara, Tahoe Chamber of Commerce, 10/14/14
27. Steinbach, John, Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel, 10/14/14
28. Anderson, Robert, Fromarc Insurance Agency Inc., 10/15/14
29. Slack, Sam, Resorts West, 10/16/14
30. Ditchkus, Stephen, Montbleu Resort Casino and Spa, 10/17/14
31. Purvance, Clinton, Barton Health, 10/17/14
32. Atherton, Patrick, Tahoe Chamber of Commerce, 10/18/14
33. Noll, Steve, Design Workshop, 10/21/14
34. Cardoza, Dustin, 10/22/14
35. Chirdon, Lindsay, 10/22/14
36. Colburn, Justin, 10/22/14
37. Greenman, Chris, 10/22/14
38. Hood, Chris, 10/22/14
39. Juha, Hani, 10/22/14
40. Lamb, Jonathan, 10/22/14
41. Poth, Todd, Getaway Reno/Tahoe, 10/22/14
42. Press, David, 10/22/14
43. Scharer, Chuck, Edgewood Companies, 10/22/14
44. Calderwood, Marius, 10/23/14
45. Choi, Cindi, 10/23/14
46. Welch, Martha, 10/23/14
47. Carroll, Sean, 10/24/14
48. Fong, Curtis, TGFT Productions/Bike the West, 10/25/14
49. Galles, Ryan, Sierra House Elementary, 10/26/14
50. Hassett, Bob, Camp Richardson, 10/26/14
51. Cefalu, John, 10/27/14
52. Lowe, Brian, 10/27/14
53. Sidney, Ray, 10/27/14
54. Tanaka, Randy, 10/27/14
55. Warlow, Jim and Kim, The Cork and More, 10/27/14
56. Woodward, Todd, 10/27/14
57. Wetter, Matt, 10/28/14

Comment Letter 13 – Thomas, Ralph, 8/28/14

From: [Terri or Ralph Thomas](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Heavenly plan
Date: Thursday, August 28, 2014 1:19:43 PM

- 1 | Heavenly is a major asset to the Lake Tahoe Basin/South shore. They are excellent partners and VRI always has the environment in their best interest. Approve what they purpose.
Ralph Thomas ; Vail Resorts skier since 1980

Comment 13-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 14 – von Hurwitz, Lon, 9/5/14

From: **David Landry** dlandry@trpa.org
Subject: RE: Photo of Heavenly Construction Vehicles - Upper Keller Road/Sherman Way
Date: September 22, 2014 at 10:35 AM
To: Lon Vonhurwitz lvonhurwitz@gmail.com, Myrna Murdoch mynamurdoch@gmail.com
Cc: Carol George mindfulnesstoday@yahoo.com, Frank Bonoff Frank.Bonoff@gmail.com, Terrea von Hurwitz bbbterri@gmail.com, Nina@citylightssf.com nina@citylightssf.com, djovovich@sbcglobal.net, ljovovich@comcast.net, Bob citybob767@aol.com, Steve Sweet ssweet@trpa.org, Frank Papandrea (FPapandrea@vailresorts.com) FPapandrea@vailresorts.com, Judy Finn (jfinn@cityofsl.us) jfinn@cityofsl.us

DL

Good Morning Lon,

Thank you for your recent letter concerning your complaint about Upper Keller Road. Just to keep you informed, I am a Senior Planner here at TRPA currently working on the Heavenly Epic Discovery EIR/EIS/EIS. This is a joint project by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region (LWQCB) for summer day use activities on the mountain. We are currently study the potential environmental effects of the project and are within our 60 day comment period. I will take these comments and although not seemingly directly related to the Heavenly Epic Discovery project will add them to our public comments for the document to possibly be addressed in the final draft EIR/EIS/EIS. I will also forward these comments to Steve Sweet or Code Compliance Program Manager and Judy Finn City of South Lake Tahoe Planning Department, Frank G. Papandrea Heavenly Mountain Environmental Manager to see if there might be a remedy. I am asking them through this email to contact you directly along with Rob Brueck our consultant who is writing the Epic Discovery Environmental Document to determine if this should be addressed in EIR/EIS/EIS. If you have not heard from them within a week or so please contact again and I will follow up. Let me know if I can do anything further in the meantime.

Best Regards,

David L. Landry AICP, CPTED-CPD, LEED Green Associate
Senior Planner
Planning Department

T: 775.589.5214
F: 775.588.4547
E: dlandry@trpa.org

PLEASE NOTE: The TRPA front counter is open M, W, Th, F 9am - 12pm/1pm - 4pm, Closed Tuesday. New Applications are accepted until 3pm.

-----Original Message-----

From: Lon Vonhurwitz [mailto:lvonhurwitz@gmail.com] fr
Sent: Saturday, September 20, 2014 9:40 AM
To: Myrna Murdoch
Cc: David Landry; Carol George; Frank Bonoff; Terrea von Hurwitz; Nina@citylightssf.com; djovovich@sbcglobal.net; ljovovich@comcast.net; Bob
Subject: Re: Photo of Heavenly Construction Vehicles - Upper Keller Road/Sherman Way

Yes. We have TRPA to be allied Thanks for your appreciation. At this point I am confused and frustrated that we have not heard back from a single one if the unknown neighbors. Perhaps I misaddressed those. Won't know till u get Back to US A

Lon G. von Hurwitz
President and Chief Executive
World Health Networks, Inc.
+1646 330 1289 mobile

On Sep 20, 2014, at 5:58 PM, Myrna Murdoch <mynamurdoch@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Lon,
I am very grateful to you for your wonderful letters written on our behalf as I don't have the knowledge of weights of vehicles or other facts to compose anything comparable.
I do know however that it takes a great deal of time and effort and I thank you.
Your mention of the 10,000 pound vehicle reminded me of a comment a tractor driver for SW Gas told me yesterday. I flagged him down as I was so upset that my lawn and sprinklers were broken due to the digging up of the gas line. The cat wheels were about my height, 5 feet, and I said why can't he drive his tractor on the Heavenly road commonly referred to as the "cat track", as he had passed my house about 36 times getting a load of sand or gravel to put on the road below my house. Derrick said " because it would destroy the road in no time". And I said just like you are doing to ours! I took a picture of his tractor and license plate. His supervisor came at Derricks request and spent the next 4 hours fixing my lawn and sprinklers with another worker

the next I heard using my term and printers that another person

While the only relevant part of my story is the awareness of the tractor driver's impact of his vehicle on our road, it makes me concerned about retaliation from Heavenly towards us.

We are interfering with their plans to make big bucks with the least amount of cost. There is no reason Heavenly cannot confine all their vehicles to their own road. It would just take their money to maintain it.

Is there any way we can hook in the TRPA and the fact that Heavenly is Forest Land, Federal, to file a complaint in Federal Court?

I'm not an attorney but it seems that would create leverage on Heavenly.

Any ideas?

The movement of sacred Washoe flora and fauna?

Something?

Aloha,
Myrna

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 20, 2014, at 2:28 AM, Lon vonHurwitz <lvonhurwitz@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Sir:

Per my earlier email, please find attached a representative photo of construction commercial traffic using our streets for access to their mountain tracks just yesterday. We have dozens of other photos just like this one.

We contend that these vehicles exceed the IGWV for use by our streets and this is a major cause of the deterioration that we have. The City nor Heavenly are maintaining this street and we have an environmental disaster from every point of view. We must ask the TRPA to now intervene and help us especially considering the new Eclipse project being considered.

Thank you.

--

Lon von Hurwitz
646.330.1289 mobile
<photo traffic 9-19-14.jpg>

Meeting Minutes and Action Steps

Petition to the City of South Lake Tahoe by the Property Owners of Upper Keller Road and Sherman Way on Right of Way and Road Maintenance Issues

Date and Location: September 5, 2014 at the City Offices

Attendees:

Mr. Lon G. and Mrs. Terrea R. von Hurwitz – representing the Property Owners

Mr. Tom Davis – City Council Member

Ms. Nancy Kerry – City Manager

Mr. Ray Jarvis - Public Works Director

Mr. Jim Marino - Assistant Director of Public Works

Representative of Heavenly substituting for Mr. Andrew Strain (who it was stated was unable to attend without further explanation)

1

(It should be noted that prior to the meeting, Mr. Jarvis, who organized the conference, was informed that many of the property owners would be remote and teleconferencing to the meeting at the 2pm scheduled commencement time. However, the meeting began at 2:20pm due to the City Manager's previous meeting "running overtime" without any further explanation. This resulted in the other Keller Road and Sherman Road property owners who had scheduled their time to be on the call, to have dropped off the conference bridge assuming a meeting cancellation.)

- I. At the beginning of the meeting, Mr von Hurwitz presented documentation that the City had neglected its written commitments from Mr. Marino from November 3, 2011 on the issue of the maintenance and use of Upper Keller Road questions, quoting his email as follows:
 - Mr. Marino said he researched the subdivision maps and concluded that Heavenly does have access via a City right of way to a 50' wide road and utility easement (start of access road off of Sherman Way.)
 - Mr. Marino said he contacted Mr Andrew Strain/Heavenly to set up a meeting. Mr Strain was going out of town. Said he would re-schedule.
 - Further explaining several issues he states:
 - ⇒ Keller Rd from Saddle to Sherman is residentially zoned
 - ⇒ Keller Rd from Pioneer to Saddle is urban collector
 - ⇒ "Unsure if upper Keller is sufficient for heavy vehicle use"
 - ⇒ Amount and type of traffic has to be quantified in order to assess the impact
 - Mr. Marino's specific action plan:

1

1. Meet with Andrew Strain at Heavenly to discuss concerns
2. In the Summer of 2012 install vehicle count devices on Keller and on access road to quantify use
3. Determine possible impact and discuss impact internally w/ senior staff
4. Develop a plan with Heavenly to Mitigate impact

In the thirty-four months since Mr. Marino's communication and leading up to this September 5, 2014 meeting, not a single one of these steps have been acted upon or documented by Mr Marino or the City.

Action Required: The City is requested to immediately produce any and all agreements and/or permits with Heavenly, whether recorded or unrecorded, regarding the use of Keller Road and Sherman Way specifically, including any fees that are or were in the past conveyed by Heavenly to the City of South Lake Tahoe for easement or right-of-way to utilize these roads.

The Heavenly representative stated that the Keller Road/Sherman Way road is indeed the only California access that Heavenly has to gain entrance to the USFS land at the end of Sherman Way for their resort maintenance and building projects. He further acknowledged that a minimum of approximately 20 vehicles per day of various sizes and weights utilize the access round trip (i.e. minimum 40 round trip uses). He said traffic starts as early as 7:30 am, operating seven days per week during the May-October maintenance and building 'season.' Mr. and Mrs. Von Hurwitz disputed the Heavenly traffic morning start time, the 'season' months and the number of vehicle trips as being well understated, as well as that many of the vehicles observed, exceeded GVW for a residential street. They also related that while the Heavenly vehicle traffic is consistently high, that the road traffic each year varied and sometimes was even more heavily used depending on what project Heavenly had in development.

Action Required: Heavenly is requested to immediately present a log of their vehicles, types and weights utilizing Upper Keller Road/Sherman Way for the last five years, including those vehicles contracted by them (e.g. vendors, suppliers and subcontractors) to determine whether the residentially zoned road infrastructure is overburdened by the unintended use of commercial business and construction traffic produced by a Heavenly right-of-way.

It was conceded by Mr. Marino that The City of South Lake Tahoe has failed to maintain the Upper Keller Road or Sherman Way roads to any adequate engineering, environmental or safety standards. Specifically, he stated that on an industry-accepted convention for a usefulness rating system, with 35 being the lowest score for an adequate residential roadway condition, Upper Keller and Sherman Way are rated at 33. Attribution for this rating was not stated. Further that in his professional opinion, the only long-term solution is for these roads to be completely demolished with new sub-base, base,

drainage and roadway brought to current standards and then maintained on a regular basis including a new re-surface paving program on a five year cycle. He believes that such a project initially would cost approximately \$780k based on the estimates he has received.

Action Required: The City is requested to immediately provide a copy of the referenced roadway condition report and any preliminary estimates or bids for the reconstruction of the roads.

- II. The City was presented with a document "Petition to the City of South Lake Tahoe, California By the Property Owners – Upper Keller-Sherman Roads September 5, 2014, (an electronic copy of which is also being sent.) The document was given a cursory review during the meeting and comments from Mr. Davis and others indicated that at first reading there might be some worthwhile suggestions made.

By way of explanation to the Property Owners for the current status, Ms. Kerry stated that the City was unable to properly maintain the Upper Keller Road and Sherman Way due to budgetary constraints, therefore allowing the streets to deteriorate to such as state as to be a public safety and environmental hazard was unfortunate, but without an immediate remedy.

Seeking to find a solution for the City budgetary crisis, Mr. von Hurwitz inquired about a special Assessment District that could be constituted encompassing Upper Keller Road/Sherman Way for the purposes of constructing a new road. Ms. Kerry stated that in fact the City had instituted such a District for other parts of the municipality, albeit they are all or mostly commercial and not residential in nature. She suggested that the participants contributing to this new entity would be the City, Heavenly, Utility Companies, USFS (as a one-time grant) and the residents. The constitution of such an entity would require on-going maintenance not just a one-time road reconstruction.

III. Agreed Next Steps and Timing

1. The City and Heavenly shall study the Petition submitted by the Property Owners and identify those actions that can be put into effect immediately and those that will be under advisement. They will present a plan in writing to the Property Owners no later than September 26, 2014.
2. Exploration of a special assessment district for Upper Keller Road and Sherman Way. The City will provide the Property Owners with access to the offices of the City Attorney for purposes of understanding the legal issues and property owner's rights involved with establishing such a District.
3. The City asked that the Property Owners involved in this petition be identified. Mr. von Hurwitz will provide the Coalition statement.



**Petition to the City of South Lake Tahoe, California
By the Property Owners – Upper Keller-Sherman Roads
September 5, 2014**

Title and Short Description: The Keller-Sherman Access Road

Location and Zoning: Upper Keller Road extending above Saddle Road, at the California Base Lodge Heavenly parking lot entrance, through and including all of Sherman Way, are currently residentially zoned roads. The city has stated "the subdivision maps conclude that Heavenly does have access via the city right-of-way to a 50' wide road and utility easement (start of access road off of Sherman Way)". This city easement permits a business, Heavenly Ski Resort (and by inference its owner, Vail Resorts, Inc.,) access rights to use the Keller-Sherman Access Road for commercial rated and service vehicles. The City of South Lake Tahoe and the Vail Resorts, Inc., have not maintained the roadway nor the easement in repair as required by **California AB -197 Easements: Maintenance: Arbitration 2012**, thereby leaving the road in an extremely unsafe and neglected condition.

Roadway Design: A single lane each way, residential street with no adjacent sidewalks or bicycle paths. Typically in residential areas the pavement is not as thick as in commercial areas. For example, many/most California cities have road asphalt 4" thick in residential streets and 6" thick in business streets. This is on top of the base and sub-base. A visual observation of Keller Road is that it is probably about 3" of asphalt on the graded natural soil. Without knowing the road construction specifications for the City of South Lake Tahoe, this appears to be less than minimal and might have been originally paved by the developer.

Purpose: The Keller-Sherman Access Road Residents and taxpayers claim easement abutter's rights and propose the immediate elimination of the current Easement and Right-of-Way granted by the City of South Lake Tahoe to the Vail Ski Company unless the environmental and residential impact issues are abated.

The residents and taxpayers of the Keller-Sherman access roads request the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (Division 13 of the Public Resources Code of the State of California).

Preliminary Impact Statement:

Geology, Soils and Water Resources

1. Settlement of the Keller-Sherman access road has caused uneven surfaces or cracking exposing any underlying base and sub-base layers and resulting in increased water infiltration and damage to drainage.
2. Slope failure of the soil has resulted in injury or damage to adjacent "terraced" Keller-Sherman access road residences, driveways, retaining walls, road and equipment.

3. Seismically induced ground shaking from commercial vehicles on Keller-Sherman access road, both zoned as residential roads, has resulted in damage to the containment structures, under drains and surface drainage facilities.
4. Erosion and sedimentation impacts are present.
5. Discharge of groundwater from the Keller-Sherman access road and storm water could impact surface flow patterns, flood control facilities, and water quality.

Air Quality

1. Dust (PM10) impacts due to use of commercial vehicles for exclusive business use by Vail Resorts, Inc. on residential zoned access roads expose soil areas on the road surface, and create lower air quality.
2. Vehicle Emission impact due to business and commercial vehicle operations.

Traffic and Safety

1. It should be noted that Keller Road and Sherman Way are used daily throughout the year for both motor vehicle traffic and also recreational use by tourists and locals for hiking and biking and should be viewed in this dual use context. As previously stated, there are neither adjacent pedestrian sidewalks nor bicycle paths.
2. Increased safety risks due to increased truck and commercial vehicle traffic on the Keller-Sherman access roadway.
3. Deterioration impact of truck and commercial traffic on Keller-Sherman roadway pavement.
4. Large potholes and cracks in the Keller-Sherman road cause highly increased safety risks to pedestrians, recreational bike riders and residential traffic. This is particularly dangerous to those bicycle riders descending the Keller-Sherman road typically at high rates of speed.
5. Increase safety risks due to Heavenly Resort personnel driving Heavenly vehicles not observing local speed limit laws particularly on the descent.
6. Heavenly snow making equipment on their "World Cup" run is directly adjacent to Keller Road at the sharp curve above Saddle Road. Overspray causes constant snow build-up conditions on Keller road outside of City snow removal efforts, which are only initiated upon natural snowfall conditions. This constantly creates hazardous snow and "black ice" to drivers. Of particular note, a non-authorized, yet highly used sledding and tobogganing run off Keller road causes many people – and particularly children – to slide on to Keller road just below the sharp curve on Keller road. The added danger of motorists skidding based on the snow and ice build up caused by the noted Heavenly snow-making, must be of particular concern.
7. Heavenly parking lot exit onto Keller Road requires a highly visible stop sign. Motorists consistently leave the parking lot without stopping or caution for cross traffic.

Biology

1. The City of South Lake Tahoe Master Development Plan could adversely impact special status species and important habitat.

Aesthetics

1. Visual changes of the Keller-Sherman access roads from on and off-site areas due to commercial traffic operation.
2. Litter and debris often accumulate within the City right-of-way on Keller Road. Large accumulations can constitute health or safety hazards. These areas are not routinely cleaned by Road Maintenance Crews. Increased litter due to Heavenly Ski Resort guests dumping garbage and litter onto Keller-Sherman access roads during the busy season.

Health Hazards, Public Services and Utilities

1. Fire Hazard – Damage to underlying gas utility lines from poor road condition could result in surface or subsurface fires and health and safety impacts.
2. Site Security – Increase in Keller-Sherman access road traffic due to Heavenly guests parking, driving, utilizing private driveway turnouts could result in unauthorized dumping of waste, vandalism, property damage and exposure of people to high risk areas.
3. Water Hazard- Infiltration of water in to the exposed underlying base and sub-base dirt layers from deteriorated road could impact underlying water lines and water quality.

Cultural Resources

1. Soil disturbing operations could encounter items of cultural resource significance.

Nuisance

1. Noise – Noise impact due to commercial vehicle operation
2. Odor – Odor impact due to commercial vehicle operation

The Keller-Sherman Access Road Residents and taxpayers claim easement abutter's rights and propose the immediate elimination of the current Easement and Right-of-Way granted by the City of South Lake Tahoe to the Vail Resort Management Company and Heavenly Ski Resort unless the environmental and residential impact issues are abated.

Mitigation Measure 1 (Aesthetics)

The City of South Lake Tahoe and/or Vail Resort Management Company shall implement the following litter and drainage maintenance measures:

- The Vail Resort Management Company shall check for and pick up litter, on a weekly basis, or more frequently if needed, on the following roads: Upper Keller Road above the California Base Lodge Heavenly Parking Lot entrance at Saddle Road to and including Sherman Way.
- Drainage maintenance needs to be performed by the City of South Lake Tahoe including such work as necessary to maintain proper drainage from and adjacent to the roadway and through culverts. This work includes the

cleaning and shaping of roadside ditches in conjunction with blading roadside shoulders, cleaning gutters, mechanical sweeping of areas with curb and gutter, and cleaning, repairing and replacing culverts. At this time, Keller Road residents are removing debris in an effort to reduce flood damage to their properties.

Mitigation Measure 2 (Air Quality – PM10)

The City of South Lake Tahoe or Vail Resort Management Company shall implement the following dust control mitigation measures during implementation of any Heavenly project utilizing the Keller-Sherman access roads and during ongoing site operations:

- ▶ The Heavenly Resort facility operator shall use water trucks to reduce dust emissions, which is considered Best Available Control Technologies (BACT) for dust control at the project site, consistent with current operations.
- ▶ Traffic vehicle emissions – To be monitored.
- ▶ The City of South Lake Tahoe or Vail Resort Management Company shall provide street cleaning services during which time Vail Resort Management Company is utilizing the Keller-Sherman Access Road.

Mitigation Measure 3 (Traffic and Safety Hazard)

- ▶ **Signs:** The City of South Lake Tahoe and/or Vail Resort Management Company shall post the following signs:
 - Highly visible stop signs and road markings for the control of vehicular and pedestrian traffic at both corners of Saddle Road crossing onto Keller Road. The present signs are commonly unnoticed and unheeded representing extreme danger to cross traffic and pedestrians.
 - A crosswalk is needed crossing Keller Road from the Tahoe Seasons Resort and a Pedestrian Crossing sign must be posted just prior to the Heavenly parking lot where pedestrians are parked on Keller Road or crossing from Tahoe Seasons Resort where sledding is rampant during the winter months. This is a dangerous pedestrian crossing, particularly when the road is icy.
 - Vail Ski Resort Company needs to provide a very visible sign and visible road marking at the Heavenly parking exit onto Keller Road for the prevention of vehicular and pedestrian accidents. Heavenly guests rarely stop or look uphill on to Keller Road as they turn out of the Heavenly parking lot.
 - The City of South Lake Tahoe needs to provide an "Icy Corner" sign at the corner of Upper Keller Road above the Heavenly parking lot.
 - Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) limit sign posted on Keller with strict enforcement
- ▶ Heavenly service vehicles and their sub contractors shall observe all speed and Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) limit laws on Sherman-Keller access roads or strict fines shall be enforced. Sign should be posted.

► Heavenly snow blowing creates constant black ice during the winter at the sharp Keller Road left turn above Saddle Road. This is hazardous to drivers causing cars to constantly slide off the road at this corner every winter. This area needs a caution sign to oncoming drivers to warn of possible black ice during the winter snow-blowing season. On a regular, as-needed basis, the City of South Lake Tahoe shall plow the area adjacent to the "World Cup" snow blowing and spread ice-melting or other suitable traction materials.

► The City of South Lake Tahoe Public Works Division shall enforce parking laws during Heavenly Ski Resort peak seasons when Keller Road is used as an extension of overflow parking lot. This is especially of concern for those vehicles parked in violation of fire hydrant access. It is further suggested that parking be by permit only as another way to control overflow and perhaps even provide the City with some incremental revenue from residents, visitors, etc.

► The City of South Lake Tahoe Public Works Division shall place in their Master Plan within one year a complete renovation of the streets of Upper Keller Road above Saddle road through Sherman Way to the Heavenly Access Road. This requiring complete replacement of roads, not temporary patching or chip and fill.

► After the entire Keller-Sherman Access road renovation, the City of South Lake Tahoe Public Works Division shall maintain the streets of Upper Keller Road above Saddle Road through Sherman Way to the Heavenly Access Road to a safe and satisfactory condition as follows:

- Perform pot hole patching
- Perform Chip Seal
- Asphalt overlays
- Crack Seal Roadway
- Mill Streets in Preparation for Overlay
- Winter Pot hole Maintenance
- Sweeping of Streets
- Snow Removal

► The City of South Lake Tahoe or Vail Resort Management Company shall replace a new road damage agreement with the City Public Works Division. The road damage agreement shall be based on the anticipated annual increase in vehicles using City roads to access the Heavenly access road. (The City should also realize that a predictable total pavement failure is going to cost substantially more in the future to repair than addressing the problem now.)

► The City of South Lake Tahoe or Vail Resort Management Company shall study the use of speed bumps on Keller-Sherman access roads within one year of the issuance of the revised Conditional Use Permit, if approved by the California Department of Transportation.

Comment 14-1 The issues regarding use of and the condition of Keller Road and Sherman Way have been noted, as have the proposed action items (e.g., mitigation measures) for the City of South Lake Tahoe and Heavenly Ski Resort regarding this existing issue. The City of South Lake Tahoe Public Works Department staff has met with the residents and has prepared a specific list of road improvements that have or will be implemented, including pavement repair to Keller Road that was completed in 2014. Heavenly Mountain Resort has agreed to monitor summer vehicle use by Heavenly maintenance crews on Keller Road and will specifically notify the residents when large or unusual deliveries are scheduled. Such deliveries will be scheduled to avoid early morning hours.

Based on the distance to the actual project sites and the on-mountain road gradients, the majority of Epic Discovery Project construction vehicles will access the top of the gondola area and the East Peak area through the Nevada Stagecoach gate and not through Keller Road. Many of the activities to be implemented are small-scaled custom built features that do not consist of large pieces of equipment or materials. Most of the vehicles will be pick-up truck size vehicles transporting small work crews and light tools. There will be very few large-capacity vehicles required to transport large pieces of materials, equipment or concrete. The Nevada Stagecoach gate will be the primary access route due to the relative shorter distance to the construction area and the shallower on-mountain road gradients.

Comment Letter 15 – Ribaud, Carl, SMG, 9/17/14



17 September 2014

David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310,
Stateline, NV 89449

Dear David,

1 I am writing to you in regard to the HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT DISCOVERY PROJECT. As an environmentalist, community member and tourism professional I support the project and urge its approval. From my perspective there are several key elements of this projects that are beneficial and need to be considered:

- The overall design includes a variety of resource protection and conservation elements that will reduce or avoid effects to the environmental thresholds.
- One key element of the project is the environmental education and interpretation program that is being developed with the Nature Conservancy. This will provide a great opportunity to reinforce the basin-wide messaging on what an individual can do to make a difference on the future of the lake. It fully complements TRPA's recent basin entry sign program to alert visitors they are entering a special place.
- The project also aligns well with the goals of the recently adopted Tourism Core Area Plan and South Shore Area Plan, both of which emphasize the region's much needed transition to a recreation based economy. This project will complement the area's transition from a primarily gaming-based economy to a recreation-based economy.

In closing, I believe that the Draft EIS adequately discloses the potential environmental effects and agree with the range of alternatives based on my understanding of the issues raised during public scoping.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carl Ribaud", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Carl Ribaud
President
SMG
South Lake Tahoe

P.O. Box 10109 South Lake Tahoe, California 96158 (530) 541-2462 FAX (530) 541-8720 www.smgonline.net

Comment 15-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 16 – Humphries, Phil, 9/23/14

Fwd: Public Comment on Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Project

From Phil

To David Landry

Recipients dlandry@trpa.org

1 | Hi, Dave, would you be so kind as to provide or make available to the TRPA Board meeting tomorrow, Sept 24, 2014 a copy of my public comment letter? I plan to attend the meeting and make a couple of comments in support of the Epic Discovery project that would amplify what is in my letter but it would save time not covering the same info I've already submitted.

Many thanks, David... I'm looking forward to seeing you again tomorrow. Best Regards, Phil Humphries Sent from my iPad Begin forwarded message:

From: Humphries Phil and Tania <humphries2010@gmail.com> Date: August 27, 2014 at 6:52:11 PM PDT
To: dlandry@trpa.org Cc: htv@vailresorts.com Subject: Public Comment on Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Project

2 | My name is Phil Humphries and I've lived in Stateline, NV since 1982. I've been an avid skier in the Tahoe basin for about 30 years and spent 5 years as a PSIA Certified Instructor at Heavenly until about 3 years ago. Prior to living in Lake Tahoe, I was a Canadian resident and worked as a Professional Ski Patrolter at Whistler Mountain from 1967 through 1975. I have many friends who still reside in the Whistler/Blackcomb neighborhood who I visit regularly and who have been involved with the summer and winter development of the resort area. Additionally, I patrolled at Sunshine Village in Banff, Alberta as well as Lake Louise, Alberta in the late 70's. I'm very familiar with the development of summer activities at major ski resorts around the world, particularly in Canada, and wholeheartedly support Heavenly Mountain Resorts application for an environmentally sensitive expansion of their resort to encompass more summer activities. It is certainly aligned with the Long Term Master Plan of the TRPA who recognize the necessity of a balance between environmental preservation and economic development.

The areas where the proposed Mountain development would occur are among the least impactable on the whole Forest Service and 'outside the basin' allotment. I know the mountain areas under consideration for development of summer activities intimately having hiked and skied extensively throughout the year for several decades. While there may be some disruption of a negligible amount of flora during the construction phase, the plan minimizes such environmental impact and the offset of securing economically viable attractions definitely offset the temporary deminimus environmental concerns in my opinion.

There are a few vocal folks in the basin who wish to return to a time where no man has set foot in the area and yearn for the age where only the bear and deer roam Lake Tahoe but that is not the goal of the vast majority of residents or visitors. Nor is it realistic. The balance between the environmet and economic interests as set forth in the TRPA Master Plan is one which all of us can support and the Heavenly Mountain proposal is in sync with that balance. None of us who are permanent residents here would stand for a development plan that would permanently alter the area we have grown to love and are committed to protect.

2 | I would urge you approve the Heavenly Plan for expansion confident that the environmentally sensitive stewardship Vail Resorts has demonstrated over the years will be replicated in this project. Thanks for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely, Phil Humphries
Phil Humphries humphries2010@gmail.com

- Comment 16-1 This comment requests the content of the letter be made available during the September 24, 2014 TRPA Governing Board meeting. This is not a comment on the content or adequacy of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. No further response to this comment in relation to the DEIR/EIS/EIS is warranted.
- Comment 16-2 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 17 – Waller, Ellie, 9/24/14

TRPA Governing Board September 24, 2014 Ellie Waller, Tahoe Vista Resident
Comments for the Record: Martis Valley West Parcel / Heavenly Epic Discovery

Heavenly EPIC Discovery comment

- 1 When viewed in connection with the effects of past projects approved at the staff level most notably this year in June- “Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable

I'd like to thank the applicant for mentioning the newly install/opened amenities. It mimics an article released June 16, 2014

<http://www.tahodailytribune.com/newsletter/11811621-113/heavenly-summer-course-activities> dated June 16, 2014

Heavenly unveiled a variety of new summer activities available at the top of the gondola. They include three new ropes challenge courses and a 3,300-foot-long zip line, summer tubing and outdoor climbing wall along with Heavenly offering hiking and sightseeing in addition to the new activities.

How many more amusements are necessary to entertain summer/winter visitors?

<http://www.skiheavenly.com/the-mountain/adventurepeaksummer.aspx>

- 2 Focusing on The Forest Flyer and Sky Meadows Coaster. This use is a “new” Summer as well as Winter activity at the resort and traffic, noise, etc. will be increased with this “new” year round amenity. If this amenity is not expected to generate more visitors, thus additional revenue, then it would not be built. Is the project consistent with the Master Plan as well as the Forestry zone district definitions- not sure, at best inconclusive as this type of amenity has never been analyzed in the Tahoe Basin. The potential noise
- 3 impacts to wildlife are a given. How will this be mitigated?

- 4 **The Northstar Forest Flyer is being litigated in Placer County**

“Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment....?”
YES, as the forest floor will be denuded for rail installation, vegetation removed from approximately 10-15 wide to accommodate the rail system, and potential erosion issues created by removal of vegetation and trees.

- 5 Will Lahontan be viewing this cumulatively with the Northstar proposed Epic program?

- 6 I'm providing links to several sources that you should read in their entirety.

Reported July 19, 2012 6:32 pm • By CATHERINE TSAI / The Associated Press

TRPA Governing Board September 24, 2014 Ellie Waller, Tahoe Vista Resident
Comments for the Record: Martis Valley West Parcel / Heavenly Epic Discovery

- 6 | http://journalstar.com/ap/business/vail-plans-more-diverse-summer-patronage-under-federal-law/article_bb68e07a-ec93-5031-8bf4-5b5050a747a5.html

Vail Resorts said it has submitted a proposal to the U.S. Forest Service -- called Epic Discovery -- for summer activities at Vail Mountain and plans to do the same for its Breckenridge, Keystone and Beaver Creek resorts in coming months. If approved, construction at Vail could begin in summer or fall 2013.

The Vail proposal is among the first in the country submitted under legislation signed into law last fall allowing for year-round recreation on developed U.S. Forest Service land already used by ski areas. The bill was pushed by Sen. Mark Udall, D-Colo.

Vail Resorts CEO Rob Katz said the summer activities should bring new people to the resort beyond the mostly white, more affluent group that typically goes skiing.

From the checklist : Plan a Breckenridge vacation October 2013

<http://blog.breckenridge.com/2013/10/08/checklist-plan-breckenridge-vacation/>

"Family vacation, college reunion trip, girls shred weekend: Who's coming with? Where you stay, the slopes you hit and what your après scene looks like varies by company. Breck serves up terrain for every level, loads of quality family time (think [on-mountain roller coaster](#) and kid's zone runs) and real mountain town nightlife"

Vail calls it a roller coaster ! which is an amusement ride.

- 7 | As previously stated in the Vail Corp public release "capitalize on the existing summer visitation at each resort and leverage existing infrastructure, creating the opportunity for high-impact and high-return projects." The summer visits will be new as the amusements do not exist at the identified locations today so they are an increase in people and impacts.

- 8 | Define high-impact and high- return projects.

- 9 | Clarification- a coaster, either the Forest Flyer or Sky Meadows will have one. Stating that the removal of the Forest Flyer in Alternate 1 does not remove a coaster on-site.

- 10 | The Consultant did not state there would be night time operations of a coaster. If there are plans for night time operation- permit conditions should be required- dusk should be the limit as to avoids lights on the coaster cars. If night time operations are an option- scenic analysis as well as dark skies must be explored.

TRPA Governing Board September 24, 2014 Ellie Waller, Tahoe Vista Resident
Comments for the Record: Martis Valley West Parcel / Heavenly Epic Discovery

- 11 | Has the Forest Service weighed in and signed a buy-in agreement for the operation of the Forest Flyer and Sky Basin Coaster? In Section 2.3 Proposed Actions there is no mention of the Sky Basin Coaster only the Forest Flyer. The Ski Area Recreation Opportunity Act did not list or define a coaster type amusement as inclusive.
- 12 | Has a glare analysis been performed which could require mitigation measures as related to visual character or quality of site surroundings as the rails are silver tubes that will change the existing character of the forest floor.
- 13 | Vegetation removal to place the tracks changes the forest environment to a non-forest use and any re-vegetation could cause operational difficulties for the Forest Flyer and Sky Meadows Coaster. How many trees will be removed ? It is significant to remove trees 24 inches dbh.
- 14 | Have monitoring activities for the potential of altering drainage patterns been identified in mitigation measures?
- 15 | Is the proposed Heavenly Forest Flyer more like the Adventure Flyer elevated up to 15 feet above ground with speed of up to 25mph, requiring a 10-15 foot wide corridor of vegetation removal with night operation capability or more like the Pride Express Flyer, a longer more adventurous experience? The proposed tracks will vary in above ground
- 16 | height offering potential for movement of species beneath the tracks at intermittent locations. How often will snow removal be necessary to keep the Forest Flyer and Sky Basin Meadows Coaster operational? Snow removal activity could interrupt and impact migratory wildlife. Have noise impacts to outlying conservation areas been analyzed?
- 17 | The vibration and noise could affect wildlife in the conservation zone.
- 18 | The Forest Service manual FSM 2343.14 (1) Encourage outdoor recreation and enjoyment of nature and provide natural resource based recreation opportunities.
 1. Definition of Natural: nat·u·ral
adjective: **natural**
 1. 1. existing in or caused by nature; not made or caused by humankind. (Merriam Webster & Oxford)

Excerpts from a PRNewswire dated March 6, 2013: Vail Resorts Inc. Vail Resorts Announce Record Capital for Calendar 2013. Highlights of the calendar year 2013

Page 4 of 5

TRPA Governing Board September 24, 2014 Ellie Waller, Tahoe Vista Resident
Comments for the Record: Martis Valley West Parcel / Heavenly Epic Discovery

- 18 capital expenditure plan include: Epic Discovery- The first phase of Epic Discovery, the Company's summer mountain activity plan, includes approx. \$25 million to transform the summer experience at six of its mountain resorts (Vail, Beaver Creek, Breckenridge, Keystone, Heavenly and Northstar). Plans for each mountain include a selection of zip lines, rope courses, signature climbing walls, Forest Flyers, summer tubing, expanded hiking and mountain biking trails and education centers. Each of these new activities will capitalize on the existing summer visitation at each resort and leverage existing infrastructure, creating the opportunity for high-impact and high-return projects

I'll close with one of my favorite comments from the Breckenridge Peak 6 EIR.

"Our national forest is not an amusement park. The unique features of "nature" should be preserved and promoted and the "man-made" impact mitigated. I support many of the proposed resort expansions, but cannot support zip-line tours or elevated rail flyers that exist primarily to provide an adrenaline rush (speed, height, etc.) to amuse or entertain visitors. These types of "rides" are mechanical, commercial, amusement activities and do not further the goals of natural appreciation or environmental sensitivity. Neither are they location-dependent—they can be found anywhere in the U.S. Save our national forests. And promote the "inherent" beauty and values that exists in nature and the "human-powered" recreational activities that will nurture our next generation earth stewards."

Comment 17-1 Chapter 1 of the DEIR/EIS discusses the Purpose and Need for Action.

In November 2011, Congress enacted the Ski Area Recreational Opportunity Enhancement Act (SAROE), which amended the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act of 1986 to clarify the authority of the Secretary of Agriculture regarding additional recreational uses of NFS land subject to ski area permits, and for other purposes (16 USC 487b). The SAROE provides public policy direction to and authority for the Forest Service to approve facilities to support summer and year-round natural resource-based recreation at ski areas. The Act recognizes the public benefits to be gained from expanding public access to year-round recreation opportunities in developed ski areas, including additional employment and economic activity for communities with public land ski areas.

The Purpose and Need for Action acknowledges that, over the years, the ways people engage in recreation during the summer months has evolved to include a new variety of activities and user experiences. Likewise, recreational use in the National Forests has evolved beyond activities traditionally associated with these lands such as hunting, fishing, camping or hiking. Ski areas serve as portals to National Forests and public lands for millions of people every year and provide important opportunities for the public to explore the outdoors and engage in active recreation.

Increased summer use at ski areas in recent years has been driven by new technologies and the growing number of people seeking outdoor recreational activities in more managed settings. In response to the policy direction and to visitor preferences, Heavenly has implemented a number of outdoor environment-based recreation activities including ropes courses, zip lines, hiking trails and summer tubing. The Proposed Action would broaden the range of existing recreational opportunities and is responsive to visitor preferences for a more diverse range of activities.

Comment 17-2 Refer to response to comment 17-1. The Epic Discovery Project is being analyzed as an amendment to the existing Heavenly Mountain Resort Master Plan. The DEIR/EIS/EIS studies the anticipated growth of summer visitor days that would result from implementation of the activities included in the Epic Discovery Project. Traffic and noise assessments are included in the DEIR/EIS/EIS analysis – no new traffic or noise impacts are identified that require mitigation measures not already included in the Master Plan Mitigation Monitoring Program.

Refer to Master Response 2 for additional discussion of the transportation impact analysis.

Comment 17-3 Noise impacts to wildlife are discussed in DEIR/EIS/EIS Impacts BIO-2, BIO-3, BIO-4 and BIO-6. Mitigation measures associated with these impacts help mitigate disturbance from noise through the establishment of buffer zones and/or timing of construction activities to not coincide with nesting/denning of applicable wildlife species.

Comment 17-4 As noted in DEIR/EIS/EIS Section 2.4, low shrubs and ground cover will remain in the area of the proposed coaster(s). Retention of this vegetation will allow for protection of the soil along with construction BMPs including but not limited to revegetation of any disturbed area.

- Comment 17-5 Lahontan has considered the effects of cumulative projects on the affected watersheds (see the analysis in Chapter 3.1 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS); however Northstar and Heavenly Mountain Resort are located in different and unconnected watersheds at opposite ends of the region. Projects proposed at Northstar are located outside the Tahoe Basin and are in the area north of the greater Lake Tahoe region as opposed to the Epic Discovery Project located within the Lake Tahoe Basin in South Lake Tahoe. Projects at Northstar would not be applicable to this Project from Lahontan's watershed impact perspective as the two ski areas are located in different watersheds.
- Comment 17-6 Refer to response to comment 17-1.
- Comment 17-7 The DEIR/EIS/EIS analyzes and discloses the effects of all proposed activities on the physical, biological and human environments associated with additional use of the Heavenly SUP area for recreation. A fundamental assumption of this analysis is that, while this would represent additional visitation to Heavenly's SUP area in the summer, these types of activities are not likely to draw additional visitation to South Lake Tahoe, i.e., these people are already coming to the South Lake Tahoe area, and the activities and programs offered at Heavenly would provide them with additional recreational opportunities on NFS lands.
- Comment 17-8 This is a comment on a Vail Resorts press release dated March 6, 2013 and titled "Vail resorts Announces Record Capital Plan for Calendar 2013." The press release associates this quote with the Epic Discovery Project; however, this is a comment on a press release and is not a comment on the content of the DEIR/EIS/EIS.
- Comment 17-9 The DEIR/EIS/EIS clearly states in Chapter 2 that an alpine coaster is proposed under the Project and Alternative 1. The DEIR/EIS/EIS does not imply that Alternative 1 removes an alpine coaster from the proposed components, rather the DEIR/EIS/EIS states that Alternative 1 moves the alpine coaster from Adventure Peak to Sky Meadows Basin. This is very clear in the first two sentences in Section 2.4 (page 2-35), which states, "The Sky Meadows Basin Coaster would provide an alternative location for the Forest Flyer Alpine Coaster described above under the Proposed Action for Adventure Peak. Under this Alternative, the Sky Meadows Basin Coaster would be added to the Sky Meadows Basin (Figure 2-6) and the Forest Flyer Alpine Coaster would be removed from the Adventure Peak area (Figure 2-7)." No further clarification is warranted.
- The commenter appears to oppose development of a mountain coaster. An alternative with no mountain coaster was considered but eliminated from detailed study because elimination of this component would not meet the stated Purpose and Need for the Project by failing to offer a sufficient range of additional summer activities as stated in Chapter 2, Section 2.5, page 2-41 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. It was determined that a mountain coaster broadens public access to an experience otherwise unavailable to a substantial portion of the visiting public.
- Comment 17-10 Nighttime operations of the coaster are not proposed. No lighting would be provided for the coaster and no additional scenic evaluation or dark skies evaluation is necessary as nighttime use of the coaster would not occur. Please refer to the visual analysis in Chapter 3.10. In Section 3.10-3 on page 3.10-11 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS, the paragraph states, "The EIR/EIS/EIS does not address nighttime light sources or dark sky compliance evaluation criteria (CEQA Environmental Checklist Item I[d],

TRPA IEC II [7 a, b, c, and d], TRPA Design Review Guidelines, and El Dorado County General Plan Policy 2.8.1.1) as no new lighting is proposed for the Proposed Action or Alternative activities and no impact would occur.”

- Comment 17-11 Under Alternative 1, the Sky Meadows Basin Coaster would be added to the Sky Meadows Basin (Figure 2-6) and the Forest Flyer Alpine Coaster would be removed from the Adventure Peak area (Figure 2-7). This alternative was included to address potential impacts to suitable habitat for a USFS sensitive species (Pacific marten) related to the proposed Forest Flyer Coaster location.

In November 2011, Congress enacted the Ski Area Recreational Opportunity Enhancement Act (SAROE), which amended the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act of 1986 to clarify the authority of the Secretary of Agriculture regarding additional recreational uses of NFS land subject to ski area permits, and for other purposes (16 USC 487b). The SAROE provides public policy direction to, and authority for, the Forest Service to approve facilities to support summer and year-round natural resource-based recreation at ski areas. The Act recognizes the public benefits to be gained from expanding public access to year-round recreation opportunities in developed ski areas, including additional employment and economic activity for communities with public land ski areas.

All proposed projects and activities have been screened against criteria at FSM 2343.14, and the screen is included in the DEIR/EIS. The coasters were determined to be appropriate for NFS lands within Heavenly’s SUP area, given (among other things) their specific locations and designs.

- Comment 17-12 Glare is addressed and analyzed in Chapter 3.10 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS on page 3.10-22, which states, “As required in the Proposed Action, low reflectivity, and low visual contrast materials or coatings would be required for the Coasters and Canopy Tour facilities to reduce the effects of glare and be consistent with objectives of the USFS BEIG.” Since the tracks would be composed of low visual contrast materials or would have a low visual contrast coating, they would not have a reflectivity to cause glare. Please note that the images of example alpine coasters in Chapter 2 (Photos F and G on page 2-10 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS) are merely examples of alpine coasters to give readers a sense of what this type of coaster looks like and how it operates in summer and winter scenarios. The proposed coasters at Heavenly Mountain Resort would not look exactly like Photos F and G.

The visual impacts of the Forest Flyer Alpine Coaster and Sky Basin Coaster are addressed in Impact SCENIC-3 on pages 3.10-21 through 3.10-26 and in impact SCENIC-4 on pages 3.10-26 through 3.10-31. The analysis concludes that no significant impact would occur.

- Comment 17-13 Refer to response to comment 17-4 for a discussion of vegetation removal. DEIR/EIS/EIS Impact BIO-6 discussed tree removal associated with the Proposed Project and Alternatives. DEIR/EIS/EIS Table 3.8-10 outlines the proposed trees to be removed that are larger than 24” dbh.

- Comment 17-14 The on-going Environmental Monitoring Program, which is existing DEIR/EIS/EIS Mitigation Measure 7.5-2, requires evaluation of soil disturbance activities and was amended in November 2013 under Board Order Number R6T-2003-0032A2 to update effective soil cover monitoring with an erosion-focused rapid assessment

process described in the Watershed Management Guidebook (Drake and Hogan 2012). The methodology was piloted in watershed CA-1 and focuses on identifying primary sources of erosion (“hotspots”) through a GIS flow accumulation mapping exercise followed by on-the-ground assessment and prioritizing treatments within a watershed context. Erosion hot spot identification and ranking criteria include: erosion risk, active erosion, active deposition, proximity to stream, connectivity to stream and stream environment zone, watershed priority, and operational priority. The Environmental Monitoring Program will be amended again to include the requirements specified in Mitigation Measures WATER-C1a: CA-1 Erosion Reduction Measures and WATER-C1b: Amendment to MPA 07 Mitigation Measure 7.5-2, Ongoing Environmental Monitoring Program.

- Comment 17-15 A description of the Forest Flyer Alpine Coaster is provided in Chapter 2, on pages 2-10 and 2-11 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. As stated on page 2-10, “The layout of the track would be dictated by features such as topography, vegetation, snow depth (so that it could operate during winter), rock formations and general infrastructure. The height of the track would average between 3-6 feet above natural grade. The maximum height would be between 15-20 feet above grade. This project would require a 20-25 foot wide corridor of vegetation removal for installation and operation (resulting in approximately 0.7 acre of tree removal due to the lack of trees in the lower areas of the alignment). Low shrubs and ground cover could remain within the corridor following construction.” Lighting and nighttime operations are not proposed.
- Comment 17-16 Snow removal for the coaster will not result in any impacts on migrating wildlife. During the winter months, no migration would be occurring (either deer or avian species) and therefore no impact would result.
- Comment 17-17 Refer to response to comment 17-3. The proposed activities would not result in any noise or vibration impacts to areas outside the operational boundary.
- Comment 17-18 This is not a comment on the content or adequacy of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. This information is passed on to the Project proponent and decision makers for consideration. No further response to this comment in relation to the DEIR/EIS/EIS is warranted.

Comment Letter 18 – Obray, Perry, 9/26/14

Public comment on Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic project.

From Perry R. Obray

To David Landry

Recipients dlandry@trpa.org

1 The local government agencies have been beneficial in educating the public about the Heavenly expansion of services on public land. The graphics at the information sessions were very helpful to understand better what is being proposed at this great recreation area.

Summer use of this huge resort can be a significant benefit to many groups of people. All levels of athletes, sightseers, and year around employment can be notable achievements through a competent plan.

I hope some day to do lift assisted mtn biking on this cherished mountain.

Vail corporation hopefully will provide an awesome service of accommodating people wanting summer activities at Heavenly resort.

Perry R. Obray

Comment 18-1 The commenter expresses opinion in support of summer activities at Heavenly. The commenter states the public outreach efforts on the Project have been helpful. Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 19 – Tevlin, Sean, 9/26/14

heavenly epic discovery draft comments

From spt2 .

To David Landry

Recipients dlandry@trpa.org

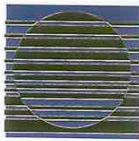
Hello,

- 1 I would like to fully support the heavenly mountain bike park. It will increase the number of summer jobs (allowing year round employment at heavenly), boost our economy, and support the further development of south lake tahoe as an outdoor recreation hotspot, instead of just a casino town.
- 2 A few comments: - the gondola in heavenly village should add bike racks so people can get up to the heavenly bike park without driving up to stagecoach lodge. - during the mountain biking season, heavenly
- 3 should pay for extra shuttles with extra bike racks that will bring people from heavenly village up to stagecoach lodge to minimize trafficand emissions up kingsbury grade. biek rack space is already an issue on existing transit service to stagecoach lodge, and without heavy additions, problems will only increase.
- 4 - uphill and cross country travel on heavenly's mountain bike park should be built, and uphill users should not be charged for using the park. the bike park is part of the regional mounitan bike trail system, and therefore should be treated like public trails. only bikers using the lift should be charged. this rule is already in place at national forest mountain bike parks like Snowmass in Aspen, CO, and is a good model that locals will appreciate.

Thank you, Sean Tevlin

- Comment 19-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 19-2 Bicycles will be allowed on the Gondola, which is described in Chapter 2 on page 2-11 under the section entitled "Mountain Bike Skills Park". The description on page 2-11 states, "Users could access the park by loading their bikes onto the Gondola, renting bikes at the Adventure Peak area, or riding their bikes up trails and maintenance roads." A similar statement is made on page 2-14 in regard to the East Peak Basin Mountain Bike Park. Visitors will be able to load their bicycles on the Gondola without the need to drive to Stagecoach Lodge.
- Comment 19-3 The commenter expresses an opinion on operations and provides suggestion for improvements regarding mountain biking operations and facilities. If demand warrants, extra bike racks can be added to the shuttles as part of Heavenly's continued participation in Mitigation Measure 7.5-19 (Implement the Coordinated Transportation System).
- Comment 19-4 Fees will be charged for use of the lifts, but not for use of the park or trails. If a rider accesses and utilizes the park and trails without lift assistance, no fee is charged.

Comment Letter 20 – Garrison, Dan, Resorts West, 10/7/14



RESORTS
WEST

October 7, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

Dear Mr. Landry:

RE: HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT AND DRAFT EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS

1 Our organization supports Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project. We agree with the stated purpose & need for the proposed project.

The project will be a benefit to both visitors to and residents of our community. It is consistent with our region's economic base of tourism and outdoor recreation. The project will further the goals of the TRPA's Regional Plan Update and the recently-adopted local area plans by providing high-quality sustainable public outdoor recreation. The range of activities that Heavenly has proposed is appropriate to the site and will help create the necessary critical mass of activities that will successfully attract and retain visitors.

In particular, we support the development of the Forest Flyer alpine coaster in the Adventure Peak area and the mountain bike park proposed for the East Peak Basin area. These are activities that are currently missing from the inventory of outdoor activities in the South Lake Tahoe area and will appeal to a wide cross-section of the public. The proposed locations for each activity are logical and well thought-out. Both activities are consistent with the 2011 Forest Service Summer Uses legislation and the management direction for Heavenly. We also support the development of the public multi-use trail identified in the document as the Panorama Trail in the route proposed.

We further believe that the environmental education program proposed as part of the Epic Discovery project will result in many positive benefits to our visitors and residents. The program will help them gain an enhanced understanding of our unique natural environment and how they can join our collective efforts to restore and conserve our beautiful area.

The additional employment that will be required to support the project elements will enhance the overall health of our community by providing more year-round jobs and improved economic stability.

Please provide these comments to all three lead agencies reviewing the project. We appreciate the opportunity to share our input with you and the other agencies on this very worthwhile project and hope each agency joins us in our excitement to see these wonderful projects through.

Sincerely,

RESORTS WEST

Dan Garrison
Senior Vice President/General Manager

P.O. Box 5790, Stateline, Nevada 89449 (775) 588-3553 • www.ridgetahoeresort.com

Comment 20-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 21 – Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, Tahoe South, 10/9/14



Lake Tahoe
Visitors Authority

October 9, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

RE: HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT AND DRAFT EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS

Dear Mr. Landry:

1 The Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority (LTVA) Board of Directors supports Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project. The mission of the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority is to market the South Shore of Lake Tahoe as a unique, world-class year-round resort destination for the economic benefit and quality of life for the area, while respecting its traditions and environment. The Epic Discovery project aligns succinctly with our mission.

As the destination marketing organization (DMO) for the South Shore region, our marketing campaigns inspire travelers from around the world to visit Tahoe South. Once visitors are in-market, we rely on the local business community to fulfill the destination vision that we promote by providing high-quality recreation opportunities. The development of the Forest Flyer alpine coaster and mountain bike park are two unique offerings that will help to balance out recreational offerings for our visitors.

As stewards of our environment, we are excited to see the Epic Discovery project includes environmental education components. Visitors play an integral role in maintaining the beauty of our natural surroundings and we commend Heavenly Mountain Resort's leadership in combining world-class recreation with local environmental stewardship.

Please submit this letter to all three lead agencies reviewing the project. We appreciate the opportunity to share our input with you and the other agencies on this worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

Patrick Ronan
Lakeshore Lodge & Spa

Jerry Bindel
Aston Lakeland Village

Tom Davis
City of South Lake Tahoe

John Koster
Harrah's/Harveys

Nancy McDermid
Douglas County

Bryan Davis
Edgewood Tahoe

California Location:	3066 Lake Tahoe Boulevard	South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150	530-544-5050 phone	530-541-7121 fax
Nevada Location:	169 Highway 50 / P.O. Box 5878	Stateline, NV 89449-5878	775-588-5900 phone	775-588-1941 fax

TahoeSouth.com

Comment 21-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 22 – Koster, John, Harrah's/Harveys Lake Tahoe, 10/10/14



Comment 22-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

**Comment Letter 23 – Murillo, Kindred, Lake Tahoe Community College District,
10/13/14**



RECEIVED

OCT 20 2014

TAHOE REGIONAL
PLANNING AGENCY

October 13, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

Subject: Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project and Draft EIR/EIS/EIS Comments

Dear Mr. Landry:

1 Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project and Draft EIR/EIS/EIS. On behalf of Lake Tahoe Community College (LTCC), I am writing this letter in support of Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project.

We believe that the Draft EIS adequately discloses the potential environmental effects and agree with the range of alternatives based on our understanding of the issues raised during public scoping. In reviewing the significance before mitigation and significance after mitigation the project appears to have appropriate mitigation for areas of impact, and the range of activities that Heavenly has proposed is appropriate to the site.

Having served on the recent Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan Committee, I believe both visitors and residents will benefit from this project, as it is consistent with our region's economic base and future recreation plans. The project will further the goals of the TRPA's Regional Plan Update and the recently-adopted local area plans by providing high-quality sustainable public outdoor recreation. The proposed activities will help create the necessary critical mass of activities that will successfully attract and retain visitors.

In particular, we support the development of the Forest Flyer alpine coaster in the Adventure Peak area and the mountain bike park proposed for the East Peak Basin area. These are activities that are currently missing from the inventory of outdoor activities in the South Lake Tahoe area and will appeal to a wide cross-section of the public. The proposed locations for each activity are logical and well thought-out. Both activities are consistent with the 2011 Forest Service Summer Uses legislation and the management direction for Heavenly. We particularly support the development of the public multi-use trail identified in the document as the Panorama Trail in the route proposed. Trails are essential to the Lake Tahoe Basin lifestyle and should continue to be expanded.

Since LTCC is an educational institution, we support the environmental education program proposed as part of the Epic Discovery project because it will result in educating our visitors and local residents

LAKE TAHOE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT • One College Drive • South Lake Tahoe, California 96150-4524
(530) 541-4660 • For the Deaf: TTY (530) 542-1870 • FAX: (530) 541-7852

on understanding, restoring, and conserving our unique natural environment, issues which are important to everyone in the Tahoe Basin. LTCC is also in the process of the launching a new Environmental Technology and Sustainability program and we believe the programs will complement each other.

LTCC has a vested interest in the employment stability that this project will bring to the South Tahoe Basin, as the additional employment that will be required to support the project will enhance the overall economic health of our community by providing more year-round jobs and economic stability. This will support LTCC's goals of more stable student enrollments.

We will appreciate your passing this comment letter on to all three lead agencies reviewing the project. Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment with you and the other agencies on this very worthwhile project for the Tahoe Basin.

Sincerely,



Kindred I. Murillo, Ed.D.
Superintendent/President
Lake Tahoe Community College District

Comment 23-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 24 – Ronan, Patrick, Tahoe Lakeshore Lodge and Spa, 10/13/14

From: [Patrick Ronan](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Heavenly EPIC Discovery Project
Date: Monday, October 13, 2014 10:57:49 AM

Dear Dave,

- 1 | My company would like to support the project which Heavenly has undertaken. We feel the expansion of the activities in the summer will be an economic boost for our economy. Heavenly has shown over the years that it is a good steward of the Public Lands and that it does not want to make any adverse environmental impacts to those lands.

Thanks you,

Patrick Ronan
Tahoe Lakeshore Lodge and Spa

Comment 24-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 25 – Tahoe Douglas Visitors Authority, 10/14/14



**Tahoe Douglas
Visitors Authority**

October 14, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

RE: HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT AND DRAFT
EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS

Dear Mr. Landry:

1 The Tahoe Douglas Visitors Authority (TDVA) Board of Directors supports Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project. The TDVA was created to increase tourism revenues within the Lake portion of Douglas County, NV (Tahoe Township). We aim to accomplish this by continuing to enhance the accessibility of our area's natural attractions to our overnight visitors. It is our opinion that the proposed Epic Discovery project aligns with our aforementioned goal to increase tourism revenues.

As residents of Douglas County, our Board believes that the project will benefit visitors and locals alike. The project will positively affect our local economy through the addition of consistent year-round employment opportunities for our recreation professionals. The distinctive features of the project, including the alpine coaster and mountain bike park, will enhance the overnight visitor experience.

The Epic Discovery project should be applauded for its consistency with the TRPA's Regional Plan Update and the 2011 Forest Service Summer uses legislation. Heavenly Mountain Resort has stringently followed the stipulations created by our local regulatory organizations in order to provide needed recreational assets with respect for the environment that we depend upon for our tourism-based economy.

It is our request that this letter be submitted to all three lead agencies reviewing the project. We appreciate the opportunity to share our feedback with you and the other agencies on this valuable proposed development to the South Shore.

Sincerely,

John Packer
Harrah's/Harveys

Mike Bradford
Lakeside Inn & Casino

Bryan Davis
Edgewood Tahoe

Nancy McDermid
Douglas County

Xenia Wunderlich
Harrah's/Harveys

169 Highway 50, Stateline, NV 89449 • PO Box 6777, Stateline, NV 89449 • Phone (775) 588-5900

Comment 25-1

Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

**Comment Letter 26 – Hollingsworth, Tamara, Tahoe Chamber of Commerce,
10/14/14**

Lake Tahoe South Shore
Chamber of Commerce



169 Highway 50
Edgewood Village, Bldg. D
Post Office Box 7139
Stateline, Nevada
8 9 4 4 9
775.588.1728 **ph**
775.588.1941 **fx**

October 14, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

**Re: HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT AND DRAFT
EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS**

Dear Mr. Landry:

TahoeChamber supports Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project. We believe the proposed project aligns succinctly with our guiding document, Tahoe Future: A South Shore Community Vision 2020. Epic Discovery will enhance quality of life, sustainability efforts and infrastructure improvements all while contributing to the economic vitality of the South Shore.

The proposed project will improve the quality of life for residents in our community by adding more year-round employment opportunities for our outdoor recreation workforce. Additionally, it will increase the accessibility to our scenic and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Improving access to outdoor recreation is essential to improving the overall visitor and resident experience and furthers the goals of the TRPA's Regional Plan Update and the recently-adopted local area plans.

We believe the environmental education program proposed as part of the Epic Discovery project is a positive step in improving the sustainability dialogue on the South Shore. Our recreation economy is directly affected by our effort towards improving environmental sustainability. Heavenly is commended for incorporating environmental sustainability measures into the project.

TahoeChamber supports efforts to attract capital investment to the Basin. In this regard, we particularly support the development of the Forest Flyer alpine coaster and the mountain bike park as these would add diversity to our recreation offerings. Both activities are consistent with the 2011 Forest Service Summer Uses legislation and the management direction for Heavenly.

Please submit this letter to all three lead agencies reviewing the project. We appreciate the opportunity to share our input on this vital project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tamara Hollingsworth".

Tamara Hollingsworth
Chair of the Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Drew".

Jason Drew
Chair, Government Affairs Committee

Comment 26-1

Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 27 – Steinbach, John, Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel, 10/14/14



4130 Lake Tahoe Blvd.
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
530 544 5400
Fax: 530 544 7643
TahoeResortHotel.com

October 14, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
P.O. Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

RE: HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC PROJECT DRAFT EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS

Dear Mr. Landry,

- 1 Our organization supports Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed project. We agree with the stated Purpose of Need for proposed project. We have reviewed the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS and agree with the conclusions reached in the document.

Our community is a year round destination and Heavenly's Epic Discovery Project will only add to that draw. Our guests come to us for many reasons, but all of them tie back into the beauty of Lake Tahoe.

Heavenly and Vail Resorts are willing to invest in our community both economically and environmentally with this endeavor. Epic Discovery will offer more options to our visitors and residents, expand the use and enjoyment of public lands, and create additional year round jobs. It will be within walking distance of South Shore's greatest lodging concentration through the gondola, and on land that is already used for public outdoor recreation.

In addition, the project plans provide that many of attractions, like the Zip Line Canopy Tours, Forest Flyer Alpine Coaster in the Adventure Peak area and the Mountain Bike Park proposed for the East Peak Basin Area, will create little to no additional land coverage while the proposed interpretive activities that are being developed with the Nature Conservancy will help teach visitor how they can protect the lake.

Epic Discovery continues the positive change we are seeing in South Shore. It is a brick in the recently adopted Tourism Core and South Shore are plans, and is in line with the federal Ski Area Recreational Opportunities Enhancement Act, which was designated to stir summer economies in resort communities.

We know that to make the whole stronger, we must diversify. This project continues our economy's revitalization and moves us forward to a strong future.

Thank You,

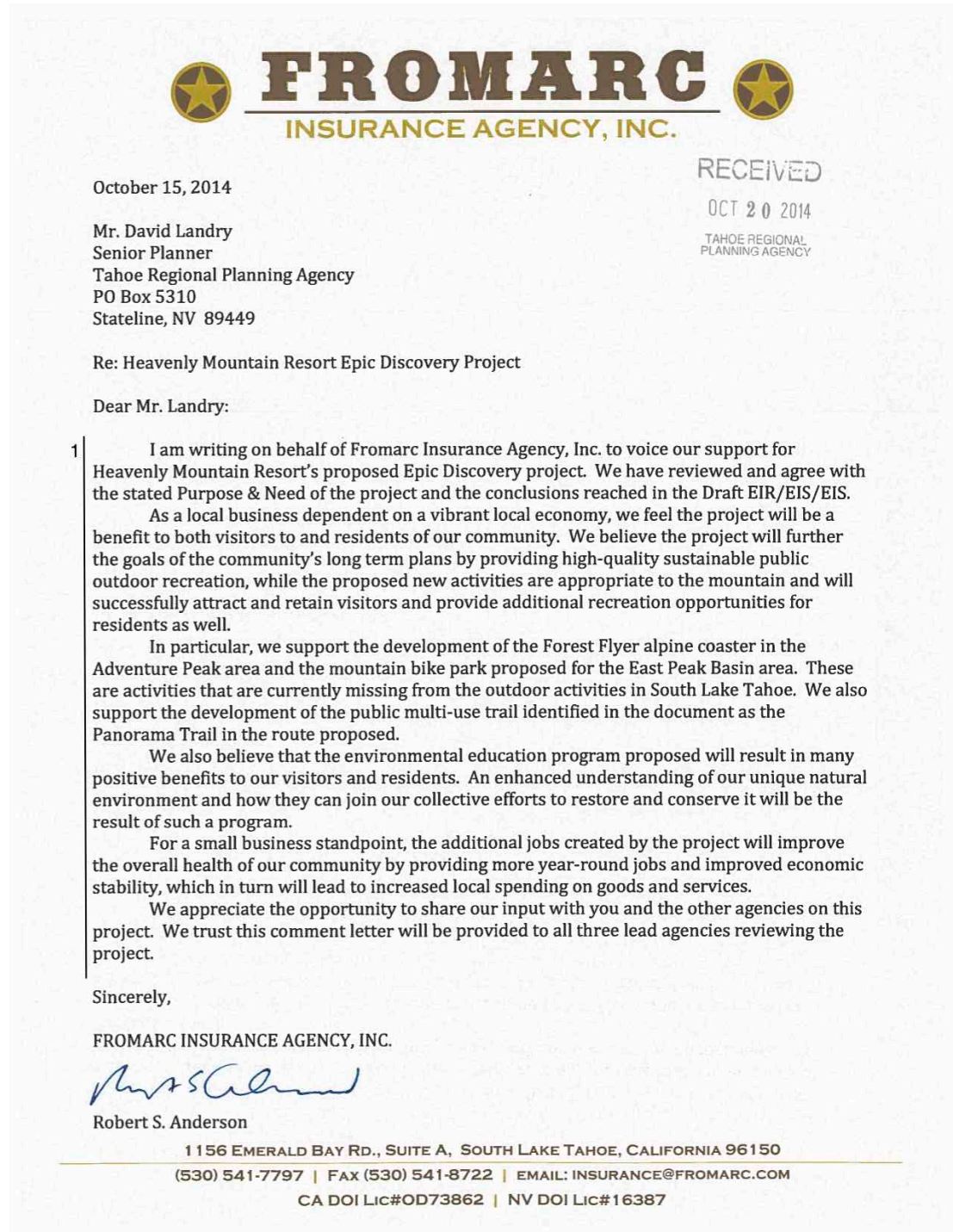
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Steinbach", written over a light blue background.

John Steinbach

Vice President/General Manager, Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel

Comment 27-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 28 – Anderson, Robert, Fromarc Insurance Agency Inc., 10/15/14



Comment 28-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 29 – Slack, Sam, Resorts West, 10/16/14



RESORTS
WEST

October 16, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

Dear Mr. Landry:

HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT AND DRAFT EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS

1 I support Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project. I agree with the stated Purpose & Need for the proposed project. I have reviewed the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS and agree with the conclusions reached in the document.

The project will be a benefit to both visitors to and residents of our community. It is consistent with our region's economic base of tourism and outdoor recreation. The project will further the goals of the TRPA's Regional Plan Update and the recently-adopted local area plans by providing high-quality sustainable public outdoor recreation. The range of activities that Heavenly has proposed is appropriate to the site and will help create the necessary critical mass of activities that will successfully attract and retain visitors.

In particular, I support the development of the Forest Flyer alpine coaster in the Adventure Peak area and the mountain bike park proposed for the East Peak Basin area. These are activities that are currently missing from the inventory of outdoor activities in the South Lake Tahoe area and will appeal to a wide cross-section of the public. The proposed locations for each activity are logical and well thought-out. I also support the development of the public multi-use trail identified in the document as the Panorama Trail in the route proposed.

I visited the facilities and interpretive area that opened at the top of the Tram earlier this year and look forward to the additional educational aspect proposed.

Please ensure this comment letter is provided to all three lead agencies reviewing the project. I appreciate the opportunity to share my input with you and the other agencies on this very worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

Sam Slack
Vice President

P.O. Box 5790, Stateline, Nevada 89449 (775) 588-3553 • www.rwgroup.biz

Comment 29-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

**Comment Letter 30 – Ditchkus, Stephen, Montbleu Resort Casino and Spa,
10/17/14**

October 17, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

Dear Mr. Landry:

HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT AND DRAFT EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS

- 1 | Montbleu Resort Casino and Spa supports Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project. We agree with the stated Purpose and Need for the proposed project. We have reviewed the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS and agree with the conclusions reached in the document.

The project will be a benefit to both visitors to and residents of our community. It is consistent with our region's economic base of tourism and outdoor recreation. The project will further the goals of the TRPA's Regional Plan Update and the recently-adopted local area plans by providing high-quality sustainable public outdoor recreation. The range of activities that Heavenly has proposed is appropriate to the site and will help create the necessary critical mass of activities that will successfully attract and retain visitors.

In particular, we support the development of the Forest Flyer alpine coaster in the Adventure Peak area and the mountain bike park proposed for the East Peak Basin area. These are activities that are currently missing from the inventory of outdoor activities in the South Lake Tahoe area and will appeal to a wide cross-section of the public. The proposed locations for each activity are logical and well thought-out. Both activities are consistent with the 2011 Forest Service Summer Uses legislation and the management direction for Heavenly. We also support the development of the public multi-use trail identified in the document as the Panorama Trail in the route proposed.

As you may be aware we recently announced a \$24 million dollar renovation project that will be completed over the next two years. We believe the proposed Epic Discovery project only enhances our ability to obtain a satisfactory return on our investment.

The additional employment that will be required to support the project elements will enhance the overall health of our community by providing more year-round jobs and improved economic stability.

Please ensure this comment letter is provided to all three lead agencies reviewing the project. We appreciate the opportunity to share our input with you and the other agencies on this very worthwhile project.

Sincerely,



Stephen J. Ditchkus
General Manager



Comment 30-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 31 – Purvance, Clinton, Barton Health, 10/17/14



2170 South Avenue
South Lake Tahoe
CA 96150

530-541-3420 TEL
www.bartonhealth.org

October 17, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

Dear Mr. Landry:

HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT AND DRAFT
EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS

1 Our organization supports Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project. I agree with the stated Purpose & Need for the proposed project and have reviewed the draft EIR/EIS/EIS.

The project will be a benefit to both visitors to and residents of our community. It is consistent with our region's economic base of tourism and outdoor recreation. The project will further the goals of the TRPA's Regional Plan Update and the recently-adopted local area plans by providing high-quality sustainable public outdoor recreation. The range of activities that Heavenly has proposed is appropriate to the site and will help create the necessary critical mass of activities that will successfully attract and retain visitors.

In particular, I support the development of the Forest Flyer alpine coaster in the Adventure Peak area and the mountain bike park proposed for the East Peak Basin area. These are activities that are currently missing from the inventory of outdoor activities in the South Lake Tahoe area and will appeal to a wide cross-section of the public. The proposed locations for each activity are logical and well thought-out. Both activities are consistent with the 2011 Forest Service Summer Uses legislation and the management direction for Heavenly. We also support the development of the public multi-use trail identified in the document as the Panorama Trail in the route proposed.

I further believe that the environmental education program proposed as part of the Epic Discovery project will result in many positive benefits to our visitors and residents. The program will help them gain an enhanced understanding of our unique natural environment and how they can join our collective efforts to restore and conserve it.

Taking your health to **new heights**

Mr. David Landry
October 17, 2014
Page 2

- 1 The additional employment that will be required to support the project elements will enhance the overall health of our community by providing more year-round jobs and improved economic stability.

Please ensure this comment letter is provided to all three lead agencies reviewing the project. I appreciate the opportunity to share our input with you and the other agencies on this very worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

BARTON HEALTH



Clinton Purvance, M.D., CPE
Chief Medical Officer

Comment 31-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 32 – Atherton, Patrick, Tahoe Chamber of Commerce, 10/18/14

October 18, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, Nv 89449

RECEIVED
OCT 20 2014
TAHOE REGIONAL
PLANNING AGENCY

Dear Mr. Landry

Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discover Project and draft EIR/EIS/EIS comments

1 I have had the pleasure of living in this community for over 37 years. Over that period, I have observed the south shores emphasis on gaming erode. Economically, recreation now plays a fundamental and vital role to the vitality of this community. To that end, the array of activities that Heavenly has proposed is needed to attract and retain year-round visitors.

Specifically, the development of the Forest Flyer alpine coaster in the Adventure Park area and the mountain bike park for the East Peak Basin area. These two projects would add a new dimension to Lake Tahoe's recreation appeal.

I believe that the environmental education program and the additional year-round employment would benefit and bolster the economic health of the community.

This project, as I understand it, is in alignment with the goals of the Regional Plan Update.

I STRONGLY RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THIS PROJECT.

Please ensure this comment letter is provided to all three lead agencies reviewing the project.

Sincerely,


Patrick Atherton, Government Affairs Committee member, TahoeChamber.org

Comment 32-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 33 – Noll, Steve, Design Workshop, 10/21/14

Design Workshop, Inc.
Landscape Architecture
Land Planning
Urban Design
Strategic Services

October 21, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

Dear Mr. Landry:

HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT AND DRAFT
EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS

Mr. Landry,

1 I have had the opportunity to review the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS for the Heavenly Mountain Epic Discovery project as well as attended public presentations where answers to my questions were provided and agree with the conclusions reached in the document.

As a Board Member for the Tahoe Chamber this project will be a benefit to both visitors to and residents of our community and is consistent with our region's economic focus on tourism and outdoor recreation. The project will further the goals of the TRPA's Regional Plan Update and the recently-adopted local area plans by providing high-quality sustainable public outdoor recreation. I also believe that the environmental education program proposed as part of the Epic Discovery project will result in many positive benefits to our visitors and residents. The program will help them gain an enhanced understanding of our unique natural environment and how they can join our collective efforts to restore and conserve it.

As a business owner in the community for over 17 years, I know firsthand how the seasonality of our community affects the schools, available work force and businesses. When complete these improvements will provide additional employment opportunities that will enhance the overall health of our community by providing more year-round jobs and improved economic stability.

As a resident in the community, my friends with their families and relatives visit me frequently throughout the year. On several occasions I had the opportunity to participate on the summer activities that currently exist. I was impressed by the facilities, the staff and the overall care for the environmental all while providing healthy, clean recreational activities for people of all ages.

DESIGNWORKSHOP

Asheville • Aspen • Austin • Denver • Phoenix • Salt Lake City • Tahoe
128 Market Street, Suite 3E PO Box 5666, Stateline, NV 89449 • (tel) 775-588-5929 • (fax) 775-588-1559
www.designworkshop.com

1 Based on my understanding of the proposed project, I strongly support the range of activities that Heavenly has proposed at the locations illustrated on the project master plan. This includes the Forest Flyer alpine coaster in the Adventure Peak area, the mountain bike park proposed for the East Peak Basin area and the development of the public multi-use trail identified in the document as the Panorama Trail in the route proposed.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts and input with you and the other agencies on this very worthwhile project and please ensure this comment letter is provided to all three lead agencies reviewing the project.

Sincerely,

DESIGN WORKSHOP, INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Noll', with a stylized, cursive script.

Steve Noll, Principal

Comment 33-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 34 – Cardoza, Dustin, 10/22/14

From: [Dustin Cardoza](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Heavenly Bike Park Comments
Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2014 10:26:12 PM

Dear Mr. Landry,

- 1 I'd like to add my endorsement for the proposed bike park at Heavenly. As a full time resident of the Reno/Tahoe area, I've always wanted more fun outdoor activities for my family. The trail system around Heavenly provides some amazing riding, but a bike park that could connect into that trail system would be epic. I seems that places like Colorado offer a much richer riding experience because of lift assisted trails. Something like this proposed park would really help put South Lake Tahoe on the map as a true summer destination.
- 2 I'd even love to see some alpine slides go in for even more summer family fun.

Kind Regards,
Dustin Cardoza

--
-dc

- Comment 34-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 34-2 The commenter suggests the development of alpine slides at Heavenly Mountain Resort, which are not a part of this proposal. This is not a comment on the content or adequacy of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. This information is passed on to the Project proponent and decision makers for consideration.

Comment Letter 35 – Chirdon, Lindsay, 10/22/14

From: [Lindsay Chirdon](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: MTB support of Heavenly Bike Park/Epic Discovery
Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2014 9:17:41 AM

Dear Mr. Landry,

- 1 I would like to show my support for the Heavenly Bike Park and the Epic Discovery Project for the following reasons. The creation of the Panorama Trail will provide much needed connections to the Rim Trail at Mott Canyon to Monument Pass and a lake side connection to the Van Sickle Trail. Currently Heavenly is a black hole, void of mountain bike trails and this public connection is greatly needed. It will connect the town to the mountains better for biking and hiking. The bike park should be considered for future expansion with popularity, eventually even to the base areas of Stagecoach and/or California Base Lodge. The project is proposed in an existing developed recreational site that is in the core of the existing mountain, utilizing existing infrastructure such as lodge buildings and chair lifts. Additional connector trails will improve the recreation experience and provide better connections. More people will access the National Forest through the gondola, hiking and biking, connecting the highest bedbase in Tahoe to the mountains better. High quality recreational experiences in the Forest breeds additional stewardship for the outdoors. The design includes a number of resource protection measures that will reduced or avoid negative environmental effects. Furthermore, the approval of
- 2 events, such as races and festivals, should be included in the approval of the project. The USFS should include mountain bike events in the NEPA process for approval.

Thank you

Lindsay

- Comment 35-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 35-2 Special events are not proposed. If special events are proposed in the future, additional review will occur at that time and a separate special use permit would be issued for such events.

Comment Letter 36 – Colburn, Justin, 10/22/14

From: [Colburn, Justin](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Heavenly Bike Park Support
Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2014 8:37:02 AM

Dear Mr. Landry,

1

I would like to take a few moments of your time to share my support for the development of a Bike Park at Heavenly. There are several reasons this is a worthwhile endeavor for Heavenly and the region.

- Currently Heavenly is devoid of bike trail unlike the surrounding area. Further development of trail within the property allows for a more complete and seamless connections to existing trail.
- Including Heavenly in the overall regional trail plan connects several pieces of world class trail and allows for the Tahoe region to continue to grow itself as part of the overall mountain bike scene. Tahoe has everything that makes a world class mountain bike destination, except a cohesive trail network.
- The development not only benefits bikers but also allow for lift assisted access to hikers and other trail users that would not generally access the Tahoe backcountry.
- This project provides additional and sustainable year round jobs for many in the region; not only in the park but across the business spectrum.
- Plans for additional expansion, as the area sees success from this initial investment in trails & infrastructure demand will force additional development further growing economic activity for the region.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my position on the bike park and providing my thoughts to the approval agencies!

Sincerely,

Justin Colburn

Comment 36-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 37 – Greenman, Chris, 10/22/14

From: David Landry
To: "Chris Greenman"
Subject: RE: Heavenly Bike Park (Epic Discovery Project)
Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2014 11:14:00 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

Good Morning,

Thank you for submitting your written comments on the draft environmental impact report for the Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project. Your comments will be considered as part of the ongoing environmental review process and addressed in a final environmental impact report.

Thanks Again,

David L. Landry AICP, CPTED-CPD, LEED Green Associate
Senior Planner
Planning Department
T: 775-589-5214
F: 775-588-4547
E: dlandry@trpa.org



PLEASE NOTE: The TRPA front counter is open M, W, Th, F 9am – 12pm/1pm - 4pm,
Closed Tuesday. New Applications are accepted until 3pm.

From: Chris Greenman [<mailto:cgreenman@tahoe fracture.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2014 9:39 AM
To: David Landry
Subject: Heavenly Bike Park (Epic Discovery Project)

- 1 | Mr. Landry, first I want to thank you for the good work you/TRPA do(es) to protect the beauty of the lake, but still allowing access to enjoy the beauty. Nearly 17 years ago we first moved to South Lake and have enjoyed its beauty and recreation ever since. Even though we have since moved off the hill, we do have a vacation home near the base of Heavenly. The addition of the Heavenly bike park and corresponding trails will help foster a culture of human powered recreation and enjoyment which is currently still lacking, in my opinion, in the Tahoe basin. Please consider the following points while doing your due diligence.

- 1
- Creation of the Panorama Trail will provide much needed connections to the Rim Trail at Mott Canyon to Monument Pass and a lake side connection to the Van Sickle Trail. Currently Heavenly is a black hole, void of mountain bike trails and this public connection is greatly needed. It will connect the town to the mountains better for biking and hiking.
 - The approval of events, such as races and festivals, should be included in the approval of the project. The USFS should include mountain bike events in the NEPA process for approval.
 - The bike park should be considered for future expansion with popularity, eventually even to the base areas of Stagecoach and/or California Base Lodge.
 - The project will create a significant number of additional year-round jobs.
 - The project is proposed in an existing developed recreational site that is in the core of the existing mountain, utilizing existing infrastructure such as lodge buildings and chair lifts.
 - Additional connector trails will improve the recreation experience and provide better connections.
 - More people will access the National Forest through the gondola, hiking and biking, connecting the highest bedbase in Tahoe to the mountains better.
 - High quality recreational experiences in the Forest breeds additional stewardship for the outdoors.
 - The design includes a number of resource protection measures that will reduced or avoid negative environmental effects.
 - Heavenly has a proven track record of providing high quality recreation and environmental protection.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues.

Chris Greenman MBA/MHA CMPE
Administrator
www.tahoefracture.com
Tahoe Fracture & Orthopedic Medical Clinic, Inc.
973 Mica Drive, Suite #201
Carson City, NV 89705
Phone: 775-783-6130
Fax: 775-783-6170
Email: cgreenman@tahoefracture.com



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Comment 37-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Special events are not proposed. If special events are proposed in the future, additional review will occur at that time and a separate special use permit would be issued for such events.

Comment Letter 38 – Hood, Chris, 10/22/14

From: David Landry
To: "Chris"
Subject: RE: Heavenly Bike Park
Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2014 11:10:00 AM

Good Morning,

Thank you for submitting your written comments on the draft environmental impact report for the Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project. Your comments will be considered as part of the ongoing environmental review process and addressed in a final environmental impact report.

Thanks Again,

David L. Landry AICP, CPTED-CPD, LEED Green Associate
Senior Planner
Planning Department

T: 775.589.5214
F: 775.588.4547
E: dlandry@trpa.org

PLEASE NOTE: The TRPA front counter is open M, W, Th, F 9am – 12pm/1pm - 4pm, Closed Tuesday.
New Applications are accepted until 3pm.

-----Original Message-----

From: Chris [<mailto:falconbiz@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2014 10:41 PM
To: David Landry
Subject: Heavenly Bike Park

- 1 Adding a bike park to Heavenly is a good idea. It will help the local economy and help people get access to the forest. The infrastructure is already there and new trails are built using much better techniques than old ones. I used to live in Tahoe and now live in Park City where we have three resort with bike lifts in the summer. I see wildlife all the time and there is no negative environmental impact from the trails.

--
Cheers,
Chris Hood
<http://webdesign.chrishood.me>

Comment 38-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 39 – Juha, Hani, 10/22/14

From: [Hani Juha](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Support for the Heavenly bike park
Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2014 1:28:12 PM

Dear Mr. Landry,

- 1 I would like to show my support for the Heavenly Bike Park and the Epic Discovery Project for the following reasons. The creation of the Panorama Trail will provide much needed connections to the Rim Trail at Mott Canyon to Monument Pass and a lake side connection to the Van Sickle Trail. Currently Heavenly is a black hole, void of mountain bike trails and this public connection is greatly needed. It will connect the town to the mountains better for biking and hiking. The bike park should be considered for future expansion with popularity, eventually even to the base areas of Stagecoach and/or California Base Lodge. The project is proposed in an existing developed recreational site that is in the core of the existing mountain, utilizing existing infrastructure such as lodge buildings and chair lifts. Additional connector trails will improve the recreation experience and provide better connections. More people will access the National Forest through the gondola, hiking and biking, connecting the highest bedbase in Tahoe to the mountains better. High quality recreational experiences in the Forest breeds additional stewardship for the outdoors. The design includes a number of resource protection measures that will reduced or avoid negative environmental effects.
- 2 Furthermore, the approval of events, such as races and festivals, should be included in the approval of the project. The USFS should include mountain bike events in the NEPA process for approval.

Thank you

--

Hani Juha

www.menlobikeclub.com

Comment 39-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment 39-2 Special events are not proposed. If special events are proposed in the future, additional review will occur at that time and a separate special use permit would be issued for such events.

Comment Letter 40 – Lamb, Jonathan, 10/22/14

From: [Jon Lamb](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Proposed Heavenly Resort mountain biking
Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2014 12:16:31 PM

Dear Mr. Landry,

I would like to show my support for the Heavenly Bike Park and the Epic Discovery Project for the following reasons. The creation of the Panorama Trail will provide much needed connections to the Rim Trail at Mott Canyon to Monument Pass and a lake side connection to the Van Sickle Trail. Currently Heavenly is a black hole, void of mountain bike trails and this public connection is greatly needed. It will connect the town to the mountains better for biking and hiking. The bike park should be considered for future expansion with popularity, eventually even to the base areas of Stagecoach and/or California Base Lodge. The project is proposed in an existing developed recreational site that is in the core of the existing mountain, utilizing existing infrastructure such as lodge buildings and chair lifts. Additional connector trails will improve the recreation experience and provide better connections. More people will access the National Forest through the gondola, hiking and biking, connecting the highest bedbase in Tahoe to the mountains better. High quality recreational experiences in the Forest breeds additional stewardship for the outdoors. The design includes a number of resource protection measures that will reduced or avoid negative environmental effects. Furthermore, the approval of events, such as races and festivals, should be included in the approval of the project. The USFS should include mountain bike events in the NEPA process for approval.

Thank you

Jonathan Lamb
408-623-8391 cell

- Comment 40-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 40-2 Special events are not proposed. If special events are proposed in the future, additional review will occur at that time and a separate special use permit would be issued for such events.

Comment Letter 41 – Poth, Todd, Getaway Reno/Tahoe, 10/22/14

October 22, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

Dear Mr. Landry:

1 My name is Todd Poth. I am the publisher of Getaway Reno/Tahoe and longtime resident of Stateline NV. I wanted to let you know that I and my company supports Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project. I agree with the stated Purpose & Need for the proposed project. I have reviewed the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS and agree with the conclusions reached in the document.

The project will be a benefit to both visitors to and residents of our community. It is consistent with our region's economic base of tourism and outdoor recreation. The project will further the goals of the TRPA's Regional Plan Update and the recently-adopted local area plans by providing high-quality sustainable public outdoor recreation. The range of activities that Heavenly has proposed is appropriate to the site and will help create the necessary critical mass of activities that will successfully attract and retain visitors.

In particular, I support the development of the Forest Flyer alpine coaster in the Adventure Peak area and the mountain bike park proposed for the East Peak Basin area. I have seen these activities successful implemented in Europe and New Zealand, where I have lived before. These are activities that are currently missing from the inventory of outdoor activities in the South Lake Tahoe area and will appeal to a wide cross-section of the public. The proposed locations for each activity are logical and well thought-out. Both activities are consistent with the 2011 Forest Service Summer Uses legislation and the management direction for Heavenly. We also support the development of the public multi-use trail identified in the document as the Panorama Trail in the route proposed.

We further believe that the environmental education program proposed as part of the Epic Discovery project will result in many positive benefits to our visitors and residents. The program will help them gain an enhanced understanding of our unique natural environment and how they can join our collective efforts to restore and conserve it.

The additional employment that will be required to support the project elements will enhance the overall health of our community by providing more year-round jobs and improved economic stability.

Please ensure this comment letter is provided to all three lead agencies reviewing the project. We appreciate the opportunity to share our input with you and the other agencies on this very worthwhile project.

Sincerely,



Todd Poth
Owner/publisher Getaway Reno/Tahoe
Local Citizen, husband and father.

Comment 41-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 42 – Press, David, 10/22/14

From: [David Press](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: In support of Heavenly Bike Park
Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2014 9:37:58 AM

Dear David Landry,

I'm writing to voice my support for the proposed Heavenly Bike Park - and all mountain biking trail projects in general!

1 Creation of the Panorama Trail will provide much needed connections to the Rim Trail at Mott Canyon to Monument Pass and a lake side connection to the Van Sickle Trail. Currently Heavenly is a black hole, void of mountain bike trails and this public connection is greatly needed. It will connect the town to the mountains better for biking and hiking. The bike park should be considered for future expansion with popularity, eventually even to the base areas of Stagecoach and/or California Base Lodge.

More people will access the National Forest through the gondola, hiking and biking, connecting the highest bedbase in Tahoe to the mountains better.

I look forward to using these trails myself, as well as the benefits from additional year-round tourism jobs they will contribute to.

Sincerely,
David Press
2080 Mewuk Dr
South Lake Tahoe, CA

Comment 42-1 The commenter expresses support for the Project and suggests further expansion of mountain bike trails. Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 43 – Scharer, Chuck, Edgewood Companies, 10/22/14



212 Elks Point Road, Suite 230 | Zephyr Cove, NV 89448
USPS: P.O. Box 2249 | Lake Tahoe, NV 89449
(775) 588-3400 | www.edgewoodcompanies.com

October 22, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
P.O. Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449

RECEIVED

OCT 27 2014

TAHOE REGIONAL
PLANNING AGENCY

Dear Mr. Landry:

HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT AND DRAFT EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS

1 I am writing in strong support of Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project. Heavenly has a long history of providing exciting activities for our residents and visitors, doing so in an environmentally responsible manner. The proposed project is an extension of that tradition.

A key element of the project is that these wonderful mountain recreational activities will be easily accessible to visitors and residents in our area. One of the major environmental goals in our region is to reduce vehicle miles traveled. These fun and educational activities will be within walking distance of several thousand hotel and motel rooms located in the tourism core area, accessible via the Heavenly Village Gondola. Outdoor recreation activities that currently require our visitors to get back in their automobiles and drive to an access point will now literally be outside their front door. Heavenly's project is a big step toward the goal of reducing VMTs.

In recent years, Heavenly has invested millions of dollars in our community's economic base of tourism and public outdoor recreation; The Epic Discovery project will be a continuation of this strong commitment. These new summer activities have been planned to complement their winter ski and snowboard operations. In addition to creating memorable experiences for our locals and visitors, the project will provide sorely needed new employment opportunities, in many cases transforming current seasonal jobs into year-round jobs.

Importantly, the project is planned in an existing developed recreation site. This area has for decades been set aside for public outdoor recreation and Heavenly has managed their operations as responsible stewards of the land. This, coupled with the easy access, make Heavenly Mountain Resort the perfect place for this project.

Edgewood Companies feels that the Epic Project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the recently approved Regional Plan Update, as well as the recently adopted South Shore Area Plan, both of which emphasize providing more recreation opportunities. Expanding recreation in our area will help strengthen and sustain our Tourism based economy.

Please ensure this comment letter is provided to all three lead agencies reviewing the project. We appreciate the opportunity to share our input with you and the other agencies on this very worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chuck Scharer".

Chuck Scharer
President and CEO

Comment 43-1

Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 44 – Calderwood, Marius, 10/23/14

From: [Marius Calderwood](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Heavenly Bike Park - Support letter
Date: Thursday, October 23, 2014 7:18:04 PM

To whom it may concern,

1 Please consider this letter as PRO regarding the new biking project to be 'Heavenly Bike Park'.
I am an avid cyclist, participating in both disciplines: road cycling and mountain biking, and also an enthusiast snowboarder (ranked #1 snowboarder at Heavenly on EpicMix during 10/11 season) and one of the biggest fan of Tahoe, which I proudly call home.

As a South Lake Tahoe resident I am a huge fan of the local hill Heavenly and believe that creating a bike park is something that most of the folks evolved more or less with cycling locally have been waiting for. Environment is very important for all of us and Heavenly/Vail will most likely do a good job about taking care and respecting the woods we like to enjoy. There is already a network of trails that is being used without any supervision and maybe not in the best interest of the forest, a project backed up by actual studies and involving people that actually know what they are doing can only be beneficial. The impact on the community will be a good one, creating more jobs and also taking care of the environment, while getting people to be more active.

There are a lot to be said, but I will conclude with the fact that I am hopeful and happy that such a project finally takes shape.

Best regards,
Marius Calderwood



[Drop by and say 'Hi' on facebook](#)

Comment 44-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 45 – Choi, Cindi, 10/23/14

From: [Cindi Choi](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Support for the Heavenly Bike Park and the Epic Discovery Project
Date: Thursday, October 23, 2014 11:44:28 AM

Dear Mr. Landry,

1 I would like to show my support for the Heavenly Bike Park and the Epic Discovery Project for the following reasons. The creation of the Panorama Trail will provide much needed connections to the Rim Trail at Mott Canyon to Monument Pass and a lake side connection to the Van Sickle Trail. Currently Heavenly is a black hole, void of mountain bike trails and this public connection is greatly needed. It will connect the town to the mountains better for biking and hiking. The bike park should be considered for future expansion with popularity, eventually even to the base areas of Stagecoach and/or California Base Lodge. The project is proposed in an existing developed recreational site that is in the core of the existing mountain, utilizing existing infrastructure such as lodge buildings and chair lifts. Additional connector trails will improve the recreation experience and provide better connections. More people will access the National Forest through the gondola, hiking and biking, connecting the highest bedbase in Tahoe to the mountains better. High quality recreational experiences in the Forest breeds additional stewardship for the outdoors. The design includes a number of resource protection measures that will reduced or avoid negative environmental effects. Furthermore, the approval of
2 events, such as races and festivals, should be included in the approval of the project. The USFS should include mountain bike events in the NEPA process for approval.

Thank you.

Best, Cindi
+1-832-398-8015

- Comment 45-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 45-2 Special events are not proposed. If special events are proposed in the future, additional review will occur at that time and a separate special use permit would be issued for such events.

Comment Letter 46 – Welch, Martha, 10/23/14

From: [Martha Welch](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Heavenly Epic Discovery Project -- Public Input
Date: Thursday, October 23, 2014 7:22:17 PM

Date: October 23, 2014
To: Mr. David, Landry, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency – Email: dlandry@trpa.org
From: Martha Welch – Email: marthaw4@yahoo.com
Re: Heavenly Epic Discovery Project – Public Input

Dear Mr. Landry,

1 I am a homeowner and part-time resident in South Lake Tahoe, and would like to submit input regarding the Heavenly Epic Discovery Project. I have read the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) relative to the project, and based upon the information in the reports, I support the Project and feel that it should be approved.

Based on the information in the EIR/EIS, I feel that the environmental concerns relative to the impact of Project are being addressed by Heavenly Resort. Based upon Heavenly Resort's past actions when developing and maintaining the existing Heavenly Ski Resort, they have shown that they are very concerned with the environmental impacts and have worked with the various agencies to address any issues of concern and to actively minimize the impacts where possible. In addition, Heavenly Resort has proven its environmental stewardship in the past by protecting and restoring areas such as the "High Meadows" area and disturbed Stream Environment Zones (SEZs). The EIR/EIS were extremely extensive and addressed items highlighted by each agency involved in the approval process.

As stated in the reports and various informative articles, there are many positive aspects to the implementation of the Project, including economic, educational, conservation, and recreational impacts. The information highlighted the fact that the Tahoe area has been trying to move from a "gaming-driven destination to a recreation-based destination". The addition of recreational activities proposed by the Project is consistent with this goal. The Heavenly Resort is only being used part of the year, which means it is an existing "resource" that is being under-utilized. The reports stated that the number of visitors in the summer would not exceed the number of winter visitors, thus having no increased impact to the Heavenly Resort and surrounding Tahoe area.

The addition of summer activities at Heavenly Resort will provide increased revenue for the Tahoe area, especially since much of the infrastructure is already there such as the Gondola, chairlifts, restaurants, hotels, and bus system. The summer activities will also provide additional employment opportunities, especially for seasonal employees that were only

1

employed during the winter ski season.

The EIR/EIS information also addresses the Project's goal of providing educational opportunities for the public relative to the Tahoe area, the environment, and conservation of our resources and wilderness areas. These programs would aim to "engage the public and to introduce new user groups to the National Forest Service lands in order to create more environmental awareness". Education is key to environmental conservation, and I feel that by Heavenly including this as part of their project, they are committed to the environmental and sustainability goals of the various agencies and the people who live in and visit the Tahoe area.

Finally, another significant goal and potential outcome of the Project is to promote more recreational opportunities and outdoor activity in the Tahoe area. The report addresses the fact that many people want or need recreation "in a more managed setting with organized and developed activities"; many people are not comfortable or not knowledgeable enough to pursue recreation in the wilderness without guidance, and many people do not have the necessary equipment to pursue certain activities (this equipment would be provided at the Heavenly Resort). By opening up summer activities in a "managed setting", Heavenly would provide the opportunity for people to participate in outdoor recreation who otherwise would not pursue these activities. By increasing participation in recreation in NFS lands, the awareness level of individuals will also increase which will lead to greater stewardship to the environment.

For the individuals that are already pursuing recreation in the Tahoe area, the proposed Project would enhance those activities. Specifically, the Project proposes the addition of a mountain bike park, mountain bike trails, hiking trails, and other various outdoor activities. The Project proposes building many connector trails for both biking and hiking; these trails would allow for greater access to the surrounding area and "will connect the town to the mountains better". The existing and additional trails will be easily accessible by using the already existing Gondola. The bike park would allow individuals to learn new skills or practice certain skills in a "protected" setting so they are ready for the trails and will be safer when encountering the various obstacles on the trails. The bike park would also be instrumental in introducing trail riding to individuals that have never ridden on trails, some of whom might not be comfortable trying trail riding on their own in a wilderness setting.

I have had many opportunities to enjoy the Tahoe area – in the wilderness and surrounding town. I mainly enjoy biking and hiking in the wilderness, so I am particularly interested in seeing this Project approved. I would love to have more trails accessible in the wilderness. I have ridden and hiked trails at various ski resorts such as Northstar in North Tahoe, Mammoth Mountain, and Big Bear Mountain Resort. It is really great to have access to trails at the top of a mountain by taking a chairlift (trails that may not be accessible if an individual cannot, or would rather not, ride or hike up a steep mountain).

- 1 I believe that a potential benefit of the Project being approved would be that Heavenly Resort could host various events such as races and festivals. I have participated in a few Adventure Races at the Northstar Resort in the North Tahoe area -- these races included mountain biking and hiking at the Northstar Resort. The events were really great and the trails were very well maintained and beautiful. I met new people, both Tahoe locals and individuals from outside the Tahoe area. It was a great way to promote recreation and a sense of community in the area. The group I did the races with stayed in lodging and ate in the restaurants at or near the Northstar Resort. The impact of the race was that it allowed for individuals to have access to the Northstar Resort in the summer and it provided economic stimulus for the Northstar Resort and surrounding area. These impacts would be the same for Heavenly Resort and the surrounding area.
- I hope that the Heavenly Epic Discovery Project will be approved. I think it is a project that, if implemented, has the potential to have a significant impact on the South Lake Tahoe area, both for locals and visitors. I believe opening up the Heavenly Resort for summer activities would be a wise use of the already existing Heavenly Resort area. Based on the EIR/EIS information provided, Heavenly has proved to be environmentally conscientious and has continued to provide high quality recreation in the past; the reports indicate that this will also be Heavenly Resort's approach for the proposed project.
- Finally, the fact that there are many agencies involved, all with different perspectives and goals relative to the Tahoe area, will ensure that Heavenly Resort follows the necessary guidelines when implementing and maintaining the various aspects of the Project.

Comment 46-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 47 – Carroll, Sean, 10/24/14

From: [Sean Carroll](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Heavenly Bike Park
Date: Friday, October 24, 2014 10:17:34 AM

Dear Mr. Landry,

- 1 I would like to show my support for the Heavenly Bike Park and the Epic Discovery Project for the following reasons. The creation of the Panorama Trail will provide much needed connections to the Rim Trail at Mott Canyon to Monument Pass and a lake side connection to the Van Sickle Trail. Currently Heavenly is a black hole, void of mountain bike trails and this public connection is greatly needed. It will connect the town to the mountains better for biking and hiking. The bike park should be considered for future expansion with popularity, eventually even to the base areas of Stagecoach and/or California Base Lodge. The project is proposed in an existing developed recreational site that is in the core of the existing mountain, utilizing existing infrastructure such as lodge buildings and chair lifts. Additional connector trails will improve the recreation experience and provide better connections. More people will access the National Forest through the gondola, hiking and biking, connecting the highest bedbase in Tahoe to the mountains better. High quality recreational experiences in the Forest breeds additional stewardship for the outdoors. The design includes a number of resource protection measures that will reduced or avoid negative environmental effects.
- 2 Furthermore, the approval of events, such as races and festivals, should be included in the approval of the project. The USFS should include mountain bike events in the NEPA process for approval.

Thank you,

Sean Carroll

- Comment 47-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 47-2 Special events are not proposed. If special events are proposed in the future, additional review will occur at that time and a separate special use permit would be issued for such events.

Comment Letter 48 – Fong, Curtis, TGFT Productions/Bike the West, 10/25/14



October 25, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

Dear Mr. Landry:

HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT AND DRAFT EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS

1 Bike the West supports Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project. We agree with the stated Purpose & Need for the proposed project. We have reviewed the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS and agree with the conclusions reached in the document.

The project will be a benefit to both visitors to and residents of our community. It is consistent with our region's economic base of tourism and outdoor recreation. The project will further the goals of the TRPA's Regional Plan Update and the recently-adopted local area plans by providing high-quality sustainable public outdoor recreation. The range of activities that Heavenly has proposed is appropriate to the site and will help create the necessary critical mass of activities that will successfully attract and retain visitors.

In particular, we support the development of the Mountain Bike Park proposed for the East Peak Basin area as well as the Forest Flyer alpine coaster in the Adventure Peak area. These are activities that are currently missing from the inventory of outdoor activities in the South Lake Tahoe area and will appeal to a wide cross-section of the public. The proposed locations for each activity are logical and well thought-out. Both activities are consistent with the 2011 Forest Service Summer Uses legislation and the management direction for Heavenly. We also support the development of the public multi-use trail identified in the document as the Panorama Trail in the route proposed.

We further believe that the environmental education program proposed as part of the Epic Discovery project will result in many positive benefits to our visitors and residents. The program will help them gain an enhanced understanding of our unique natural environment and how they can join our collective efforts to restore and conserve it.

The additional employment that will be required to support the project elements will enhance the overall health of our community by providing more year-round jobs and improved economic stability.

Please ensure this comment letter is provided to all three lead agencies reviewing the project. We appreciate the opportunity to share our input with you and the other agencies on this very worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

Curtis Fong
Event Director
TGFT Productions, LLC
Bike the West

P.O. Box 5123 * 313 Tramway Drive, Suite 15 * Stateline, NV 89449 * 775.771.3246 * tgft@bikethewest.com

Comment 48-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 49 – Galles, Ryan, Sierra House Elementary, 10/26/14

Ryan Galles
Principal

Shandi Ashmore
Principal's Secretary

Dianne Pollock
Office Assistant



Robin McClary/Jordan Wolf
School Psychologists

Margaret McKean
District Nurse

Wendy Copple
Librarian

SIERRA HOUSE ELEMENTARY

1709 Remington Trail
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
Phone: 530-543-2327
Fax: 530-543-2330

To: US Forest Service and the Lahontan Regional Water Resources Control Board

From: Ryan Galles, Principal Sierra House Elementary

Re: Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project

Date: October 26, 2014

1 I am writing you to let you know that I am in strong support of the Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery project. I support this project because I believe that it is in alignment with the goals of the Regional plan and I believe it will create incredible experiences for residents and visitors alike. I like the fact that this project will help create opportunities for locals to be employed year round and I believe it will accelerate the area's transition from an antiquated gaming-based economy to a recreation-based economy.

As an educator, I believe that we need more opportunities for outdoor recreation in the summer for our youth. The past several years, our school district has not been able to offer a summer school for our students. I believe many community partners will be able to take advantage of the opportunity that heavenly provides to get kids to be active and learn more about their natural surroundings.

Many of the students in our school district don't get opportunities to experience the outdoor environment of Lake Tahoe. Our community suffers from high poverty, but our students should not be deprived of opportunities to experience things like this. Heavenly has been an amazing partner for us and has given our students opportunities that they wouldn't have otherwise experienced. We know this will continue with the expansion of the Epic Discovery Project. Lake Tahoe is the best classroom that a student can have and I believe Heavenly is committed to making these experiences, the experiences of a lifetime for youth in our community.

I believe the location is a perfect spot for outdoor public recreation and I am convinced this project will have little to no adverse environmental effects. Many of the project elements are located off the ground and have little or no land coverage associated with them.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Ryan Galles
Principal
Sierra House Elementary School

Comment 49-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 50 – Hassett, Bob, Camp Richardson, 10/26/14



CAMP RICHARDSON

Historic Resort & Marina

October 26, 2014

Mr. David Landry
Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
dlandry@trpa.org

Dear Mr. Landry:

HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT AND DRAFT EIR/EIS/EIS COMMENTS

1 Camp Richardson Resort supports Heavenly Mountain Resort's proposed Epic Discovery project. We agree with the stated Purpose & Need for the proposed project. We have reviewed the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS and agree with the conclusions reached in the document.

The project will be a great amenity for locals and guests to the basin. At a time when it is recognized that tourism and recreation are an incredible asset to our region, it is important to expand those opportunities. It will also further the goals of the TRPA's Regional Plan Update by providing high-quality sustainable public outdoor recreation. The site that Heavenly has proposed is very appropriate for the activities. It will attract guests and further fuel the local economy.

As I grew up in Northern New Jersey, I had opportunity and enjoyed the alpine coaster at Vernon Valley. With fond memories, I support the Forest Flyer and believe Adventure Peak is a well thought out and wise location for it. As an avid bicyclist, The East Peak Basin area is also a good choice for the mountain bike park. The 2011 Forest Service Summer Uses legislation and direction in the management of Heavenly, indicate that both activities are appropriate for the area. The Panorama trail (as proposed) would also add to the amenities.

As a company that believes we all play a role in preserving this beautiful and precious place, it is important that the proposed environmental education program be implemented. Education is key for locals and guests to understand their part in keeping the Lake Tahoe Basin special.

Being a recreation provider and outdoor enthusiast myself, I believe it is important to expand upon outdoor recreation in the basin. This will increase tourism, create jobs and drive the local economy. Healthy businesses allow for more money to be invested in the Lake Tahoe basin.

Please make sure this is passed on to other appropriate agencies. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on a project, which will enhance the recreational amenities in South Lake Tahoe.

Sincerely,

Bob Hassett
President

1.800.544.1801 • P.O.Box 9028 • 1900 Jameson Beach Rd • So. Lake Tahoe, CA 96158 • Fax 530.541.1802

Comment 50-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 51 – Cefalu, John, 10/27/14

p.2

JOHN N. CEFALU
753 LAKEVIEW AVE.
SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, CA. 96150

October 27, 2014

Mr. David L. Landry, AICP,CDP
LEED Green Associates, Senior Planner
Planning Department
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
P.O. Box 5310
Stateline, Nevada 89449

Re: Heavenly Mountain Resort Epic Discovery Project

Mr. Landry,

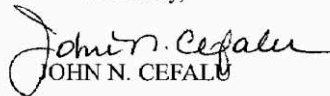
1 I am commenting as a proponent of Heavenly's Epic Discovery Project and I consider the design of this project to be in total harmony with the direction that Heavenly is taking in developing off-season activities for the Mountain.

As a resident of this community when Heavenly was first developed into a major ski area in the region, a business owner for many of those years and former member of the Governing Board of TRPA, I am in complete and total support for the investment that Heavenly is prepared to make in order to see the year-around activity occur on the Mountain.

I have witnessed the dramatic changes to the economy in this community and it is fitting that as we become more recreation oriented that the development of these sorts of facilities designed for the family visitors and residents, become reality. The consideration that TRPA has extended to the economy as a means of accomplishing many of the environmental goals that are necessary is a compelling reason why projects such as this one, need to be encouraged. Not only for the capital investment but, as well, the environmental improvements that will become a part of the project.

I applaud Heavenly Mountain Resort for their willingness to make the investment in a community that has struggled to attract the capital necessary to improve the quality of our facilities and the visitor experience, so that we remain competitive in the tourist economy. Further, I am confident that the Management of Heavenly Mountain Resort, will responsibly fulfill the environmental conditions of this project and are considered excellent stewards of their facilities.

Sincerely,


JOHN N. CEFALU

Comment 51-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 52 – Lowe, Brian, 10/27/14

From: [Brian Lowe](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Bike park
Date: Monday, October 27, 2014 3:55:52 PM

- 1 | I long to live and raise my children in a proper Mountain town. The South Shore is so very far behind many other Mt. communities. In my view one way to catch up is to support trail development and a proper bike park.

Sincerely, Brian Lowe South Tahoe citizen.

Sent from my iPhone

Comment 52-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 53 – Sidney, Ray, 10/27/14

From: raysidney@gmail.com on behalf of [Ray Sidney](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Comments on Epic Discovery project
Date: Monday, October 27, 2014 2:42:58 PM

October 27, 2014

Mr. David Landry, Senior Planner
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449

Dear Mr. Landry,

I am writing to you in advocacy of Heavenly's Epic Discovery project.

- 1 I have lived in Stateline and Zephyr Cove since the end of 2004, when I moved to Tahoe to enjoy the wonderful activities that the region supports. Since then, I have been very involved in the community up here, particularly in matters of education and the environment.

In brief: I believe that the Epic Discovery project is an excellent idea both for Heavenly and for the South Tahoe region, and I hope that it is completed and up and running as quickly as possible.

Over the years, Heavenly has performed much development on the mountain for the enjoyment of both locals and visitors. This development is used heavily during the winter, and much less at other times of the year. The Epic Discovery project will significantly increase the ability of people to enjoy the mountain, while requiring minimal additional land to be developed. Most of the infrastructure needed for supporting the project and its full use—hotels, parking, restaurants, gondola—is already in place. It would be wonderful for all of it to be used to its full potential.

Like many ski resorts, Heavenly provides seasonal employment for a large number of people. With the completion of the Epic Discovery project, many of those employees will be able to continue working for Heavenly year-round. This increased job security will help stabilize the region's economy and community.

Thus, overall, this project is a very environmentally efficient way to bring additional tourists and jobs in to the South Shore economy. It will strongly enhance the Tahoe "brand" in a world of increasingly competitive branding.

It is worth mentioning that this project brings together a large number of different activities that are not readily available to most visitors in the South Shore region. It is not merely a copycat that provides yet another version of the same limited activities. I myself look forward to making use of the the mountain bike part and various other parts of this project when they are completed.

Heavenly has shown itself to be a responsible environmental steward and community member. I trust Heavenly and its executives—some of whom I have spoken with in person about this project—to continue to behave in this way and to take into account the needs of the community, Tahoe tourists, and the environment

1 | for this project and for other projects in the future. I believe that the Draft EIS accurately lists the potential environmental effects of this project, and that Heavenly will work hard to ensure that this project is about preserving the beautiful Tahoe environment and sharing it with people. I even dare to hope that the environmental education component of the Epic Discovery project will make a real difference in people's understanding of the environment and will help preserve it for future generations.

The future of Tahoe lies in environmentally responsible recreation. Heavenly has long been a leader in providing precisely that, and this approval of this project will help it continue to do so.

Please arrange that this comment letter be sent to all three agencies reviewing the Epic Discovery project.

Thank you,
Ray Sidney
775-901-0557

Comment 53-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 54 – Tanaka, Randy, 10/27/14

From: [Randy Tanaka](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Heavenly Bike Park
Date: Monday, October 27, 2014 5:27:12 PM

1 | Mr. David Landry,
Greetings. As a fairly long time member of the Tahoe community (since 1995) I would like to voice my support of the Heavenly Bike Park. Our family recently got back from a trip to Whistler for world class bike park riding. While there are a few places around Tahoe to ride park, they are not in my opinion world class (yet). This bike park would be a chance for the basin to have a world class destination bike park. The additional stimulation to the local economy will impact me directly and I'm all for it! The ability to use the existing lifts/infrastructure seems like an obvious choice. While we know gambling is not holding the economic impact like it used to, this is a chance for Tahoe to shine with what it should be known for. Awesome outdoor activities!

While I am no expert at the design and upkeep for a park, I can tell you what is attractive to me and my peers for riding (mostly people aged 21-50, college educated people that tend to travel when not hitting our favorite trails around Tahoe). If you ever want an opinion from a slightly older crowd that has been around for a while please hit me up. We are more than willing to provide one point of view from riders leveled beginner through pro.

Thank you for your efforts on this matter and considering the input from the community.

Sincerely,
Randy Tanaka
Heavenly Employee 1995-96
Pass holder for the past 10+ years.

Comment 54-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 55 – Warlow, Jim and Kim, The Cork and More, 10/27/14

From: [Jim Warlow](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: FW: Letter of support for Heavenly's Epic Discovery Project
Date: Monday, October 27, 2014 4:22:47 PM

From: Jim Warlow [mailto:jim@thecorkandmore.com]
Sent: Monday, October 27, 2014 4:19 PM
To: 'dlandry@trpa.org.'
Cc: 'astrain@vailresorts.com'
Subject: Letter of support for Heavenly's Epic Discovery Project

Dear Mr. Landry,

1 | My name is Jim Warlow. My wife, Kim, and I have owned The Cork And More: a wine ,gift, and specialty food shoppe in South Lake Tahoe, for 38 years. During our 40 years in S.L.T. Jim has worked at Heavenly Mountain Resort for 35 years as a ski patrolman[now retired]. We both have enjoyed and recreated in Lake Tahoe during all seasons. As well as being a business owner in S.L.T., Jim resides on the board of directors of the S.L.T. Chamber of Commerce, which makes us very interested in improving the economic vitality of the neighborhood.

To the point, we believe Heavenly's Epic Discovery Project totally falls into line with the Chambers 2020 Vision Project and redevelopment of S.L.T. and Lake Tahoe's creation of the most positive visitor experience for travelers from throughout the world.

We were pleasantly surprised last spring upon visiting Heavenly's Top Gondola station the number of people from a variety of lifestyles that were milling about[non-skiers]and enjoying the mid-mountain environment. They were being afforded a chance to experience what we locals enjoy thru skiing or mountain biking. We believe Heavenly's Epic Discovery Project is a chance for our visitors to experience what we locals know and love about our home. Heavenly's project will centralize and provide an opportunity for visitors to have a brief wilderness experience with a minimal of impact on our environment. This will in turn successfully attract and retain visitors. We would like to express our surprise that the US Forest Service and their permit holders have not used the designated space to provide more year round opportunities to more people on pretty much an existing footprint.

In conclusion, we hope the powers in charge of moving forward on Heavenly's Epic Discovery Project will agree with their stated purpose and need for the proposed project. We hope you will in turn take this opportunity to partner with this proven player in developing our region's economic base of tourism and outdoor recreational needs.

Respectfully,

Jim and Kim Warlow
The Cork And More

Comment 55-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 56 – Woodward, Todd, 10/27/14

From: [Todd Woodward](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Heavenly mountain bike park
Date: Monday, October 27, 2014 6:35:49 PM

Mr Landry

- 1 | Please approve the heavenly bike park. I love mountain biking and I think heavenly is a great place to add more mtn bike trails. Not every one has the ability to climb up a mountain to ski or mountain bike, but many more have the ability to go down. The more people recreating the better. Connecting vansickle to the rim trail is a no brainer. Please approve the heavenly bike park.

Todd Woodward

Comment 56-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 57 – Wetter, Matt, 10/28/14

From: [Matt Wetter](#)
To: [David Landry](#)
Subject: Support for Bike Park
Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2014 5:57:30 PM

Hello Mr Landry,

- 1 This email is being sent to express my support for the proposed heavenly bike park. I am an avid biker, hiker, and skier in the area and fully support the development of a bike park in slt for economic and recreational reasons. More specifically please see below.
- # Creation of the Panorama Trail will provide much needed connections to the Rim Trail at Mott Canyon to Monument Pass and a lake side connection to the Van Sickle Trail.
- #It will connect the town to the mountains better for biking and hiking.
- 2 #The approval of events, such as races and festivals, should be included in the approval of the project. The USFS should include mountain bike events in the NEPA process for approval.
- #The bike park should be considered for future expansion with popularity, eventually even to the base areas of Stagecoach and/or California Base Lodge.
- 3 #The project will create a significant number of additional year-round jobs.
- #The project is proposed in an existing developed recreational site that is in the core of the existing mountain, utilizing existing infrastructure such as lodge buildings and chair lifts.
- #Additional connector trails will improve the recreation experience and provide better connections.
- #High quality recreational experiences in the Forest breeds additional stewardship for the outdoors.
- #The design includes a number of resource protection measures that will reduced or avoid negative environmental effects.

Sincerely,
Matt Wetter
916.201.8337

- Comment 57-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 57-2 Special events are not proposed. If special events are proposed in the future, additional review will occur at that time and a separate special use permit would be issued for such events.
- Comment 57-3 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation. .

7.6 RESPONSES TO MEETING COMMENTS

Three public meetings were held to accept comments on the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS:

- 58. Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Advisory Planning Commission Meeting, 9/10/14
- 59. United States Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Meeting, 9/18/14
- 60. Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Governing Board Meeting, 9/24/14

Fifteen (15) comments were received from 10 participants during the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Advisory Planning Commission meeting on September 10, 2014:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 1. Trout, Roger | 9. Fish, Ben |
| 2. Donohue, Charlie | 10. Grubb Clay |
| 3. Donahue, Charlie | 11. Guevin, Eric |
| 4. Curry, Joy | 12. Guevin, Eric |
| 5. Humphries, Phil | 13. Guevin, Eric |
| 6. Chaplin, Carol | 14. Guevin, Eric |
| 7. Rusk, Lon | 15. Guevin, Eric |
| 8. Garrison, Dan | |

Six (6) comments were received from three participants during the USDA Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit meeting on September 18, 2014:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Dobrowolski, Christine | 4. Dahler, Russ |
| 2. Dobrowolski, Christine | 5. Miller, Nils |
| 3. Dobrowolski, Christine | 6. Miller, Nils |

Thirty (30) comments were received from 22 participants during the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board meeting on September 24, 2014:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Shute, Clem | 16. Rusk, Lon |
| 2. Lawrence, Jim | 17. Proctor, Chris |
| 3. Lawrence, Jim | 18. Thomaselli, Lauren |
| 4. Carlson, Tim | 19. Chaplin, Carol |
| 5. Aldean, Shelly | 20. Newberger, Michael |
| 6. Beyer, Casey | 21. King, Bobby |
| 7. Beyer, Casey | 22. Poth, Todd |
| 8. Beyer, Casey | 23. Howard, Deb |
| 9. Beyer, Casey | 24. Gorman, Bea |
| 10. Santiago, Norma | 25. Fish, Ben |
| 11. Waller, Ellie | 26. Gallas, Ryan |
| 12. Waller, Ellie | 27. Moss, Mimi |
| 13. Waller, Ellie | 28. High, Ryan |
| 14. Waller, Ellie | 29. Aldean, Shelly |
| 15. Humphries, Phil | 30. Cole, Hal |

Comment Letter 58 – TRPA APC Meeting, 9/10/14

TRPA APC Hearing – September 10, 2014

Advisory Planning Commission comments/questions

1 Roger Trout - Why did we do an EIR? Concerned that the EIR will allow for potential overriding considerations for significant impacts..
Rob Brueck explained that TRPA would require the mitigation measures.
Bud Amorfini pointed out that the updated WDR will also require that the mitigation measures are implemented.

2 Charlie Donohue – Related to nesting birds and Marten. How where the buffers developed? Wants to make sure that future survey data is also shared with Nevada wildlife agencies.
Rob Brueck answered that buffers were developed with input from USFS bio staff and USFWS for migratory birds.

3 How would the monitoring be conducted on the connector trails?
Jonathan Cook Fisher pointed out that proposed on mountain activities will likely be used by families and people new to the mountain and won't likely increase the number of advance trail riders, so most of the new use of the connector trails would be experienced riders and hikers. The connectors are not designed to be downhill mountain bike trails.

4 Joy Curry – Hiked the Van Sickle Connector yesterday and noted that there was no problem between hikers and bikers on the existing trail.

Public comments

5 Phil Humphries – Supports the project – will be a benefit to visitors and provide access to forest environment that some people can't currently find on their own. Educational opportunities would be fantastic.

6 Carol Chaplin – Lake Tahoe Visitor's Authority. Improves recreational offerings for the area and includes educational opportunities. Located in the existing operational boundary so has minimal environmental impacts. The current visitors are looking for more active adventures today than in the past (example, ecotourism).

7 Lon Rusk, Lakeside Inn and Casino Manager. Gaming economy has changed – we have to market both gaming and outdoor activities available to the visitor. This project will increase opportunities and benefit the entire region's economy. Believes it is well thought out because the mountain is already developed and has existing infrastructure. The education component will also help to reduce impacts from human use in the forest in the whole Region.

8 Dan Garrison, Ridge Resorts. Agrees with the previous comments in favor of the project. The projects will enhance the guest experience in Tahoe. Agrees that the existing monitoring and mitigation program will protect the environment.

- 9 Ben Fish, TAMBA President. Fully supports the Project, makes best use of existing infrastructure to provide for greater good of residents and visitors. Membership supports the improvements proposed in the mountain bike park and trail connections to existing trails. The more people that engage the forest, the more people will have a greater appreciation for the forest. This project satisfies existing demand for better mountain bike facilities.
- 10 Clay Grubb. Supports the proposed trails. Has found that if you don't build environmentally sensible trails, users will build them and they won't be sustainable, and will have greater impacts. Better to design them appropriately. The Mountain Bike Park and connector trails planning has been in the works for many years. The connector trails should be called multi-use trails because they will provide for both hikers and trail riders. The connector trails won't benefit Heavenly as much as it will the exiting residents and riders of existing trails. Regarding user surveys, the Tahoe Rim Trail is required to do annual surveys of use and potential conflicts. So, there is existing monitoring already in place. Past monitoring of the Van Sickle trail has shown no identified user conflicts – only some concerns about dust during dry months. People already use transit to access the existing Van Sickle trails. There is a huge benefit proposed for the TRT near Mott Canyon.

APC Comments/Questions

- Fire Marshall Eric Guevin and Assistant Chief Novak. Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District
- 11 Will send written comments. Request fire modeling be done to determine size and locations of necessary safety zones – in case of wildfire that threatens mountain activities.
- 12 Requests revision of Section 7.5-34 that Tahoe Douglas Fire District would be first responder in East Peak Basin. Would like EIS to require provisions (pre planning)
- 13 for adequate fire evacuation capacity in an event of an emergency.
- 14 Recommend that 3.1.6.2 and 2.3.5 include road management plans for emergency responders to evacuate the mountain on roadways – make sure roads can support such a need.
- 15 Strongly support the proposed gondola winter snowcat evacuation route for public safety. Would ask that trails be clearly marked with signs so that users can provide responders their location if rescue is needed.
Would like helicopter landing zones to be identified on the mountain if needed for evacuation.

- Comment 58-1 Rob Brueck and Bud Amorfini responded to this question during the meeting and explained that mitigation measures are required by TRPA and Lahontan and therefore an EIR has been prepared. No further response is necessary.
- Comment 58-2 Rob Brueck responded during the meeting that buffers were developed with input from Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife staff. No further response is necessary.

- Comment 58-3 Jonathan Cook Fisher responded that most new use of the connector trails would be by experienced riders and hikers and not novice trail riders. He also stated the connectors are not designed to be downhill mountain bike trails. Annual monitoring along the Tahoe Rim Trail will continue to track use and identify potential user conflicts.
- Comment 58-4 Comment noted. This is not a comment on the content or adequacy of the DEIR/EIS/EIS and no further response is warranted.
- Comment 58-5 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 58-6 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 58-7 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 58-8 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 58-9 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 58-10 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 58-11 Refer to response to comment 1-2 regarding fire modeling and safety zones.
- Comment 58-12 Refer to response to comment 1-4 regarding the status of Mitigation Measure 7.5-34 (Ensure Adequate Police/Sheriff/Fire Capacity).
- Comment 58-13 Refer to response to comment 1-2 regarding fire evacuation capacity.

HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT EPIC DISCOVERY PROJECT EIR/EIS/EIS
RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

- Comment 58-14 Refer to response to comment 1-2 regarding road management plans for emergency access and evacuation.
- Comment 58-15 Refer to response to comments 1-5 and 1-6 regarding trail markings and helicopter landing zones.

Comment Letter 59 – USDA Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
Public Workshop, 9/18/14

Written Comment for the Heavenly Epic Discovery Project: We welcome and invite your written comments and input on the Heavenly Epic Discovery Project. To preserve your full rights of participation in the Heavenly Epic Discovery Project, please be sure to include your name and address. Your comments will be most helpful if they are specific as possible, telling us what you like or don't like and why.

1. TRAILS IN BIKE PARK NEED TO BE FUN
- SHOULD INCLUDE BIRMS, JUMPS (EVEN
A BLUE ~~BE~~ CAN ~~BE~~ BE BUILT WITH LOTS
OF JUMPS
- ~~SHOULD BE~~ ^{FUN!} BE AS MUCH AS CORRAL
- IF NOT BUILT SIMILAR (OR BETTER) THAN
CORRAL, WHY WOULD RIDERS PAY?

2. NEED ADVANCED TRAILS TO DISPERSE RIDERS
- THE FAMILY WITH THE 6 Y.O. & 16 Y.O.
WILL BE RIDING DIFFERENT TRAILS
- THE 16 Y.O. WHO RIDES HARD
SHOULD NOT BE ON A TRAIL WITH AN
INTERMEDIATE RIDER (CONFLICT!)

3. THE LUGE (SP?) SHOULD NOT BE BUILT
IN THE PINNACLES AREA, WIND REMOVES
SNOW AND SKIERS WILL BE IMPACTED.
THE TUBING HILL IS A BETTER OPTION.

(You may attach additional pages if desired)

Name CHRISTINE DOBROWOLSKI
Mailing Address 1464 STERLING CT, SLT
Email christine.dobrowolski@gmail.com

no spell check! :)

You may also email comments to dlandry@trpa.org
Subject: "Heavenly Epic Discovery Project"
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/lbmu/HeavenlyEpicProject>

Written Comment for the Heavenly Epic Discovery Project: We welcome and invite your written comments and input on the Heavenly Epic Discovery Project. To preserve your full rights of participation in the Heavenly Epic Discovery Project, please be sure to include your name and address. Your comments will be most helpful if they are specific as possible, telling us what you like or don't like and why.

4	Keep up the Good work!
(You may attach additional pages if desired)	
Name	Russ Dähler
Mailing Address	1944 Venice S. Lake Tahoe 96150
Email	

You may also email comments to dlandry@trpa.org
Subject: "Heavenly Epic Discovery Project"
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/ltbmu/HeavenlyEpicProject>

Written Comment for the Heavenly Epic Discovery Project: We welcome and invite your written comments and input on the Heavenly Epic Discovery Project. To preserve your full rights of participation in the Heavenly Epic Discovery Project, please be sure to include your name and address. Your comments will be most helpful if they are specific as possible, telling us what you like or don't like and why.

5 ☒ Fully Support This Project.

I agree with the concept of NOT letting cyclists off the Gondola mid-station, since ~~letting~~ letting them off there would give downhill access to Van Sickle & would result in DH biking/hiker conflict

6 ☒ I would NOT like to see the Ski Meadows Coaster located in Pinnacles area (Alt #1)

(You may attach additional pages if desired)

Name Nils Miller

Mailing Address _____

Email ny.miller@sbcglobal.net

You may also email comments to dlandry@trpa.org
Subject: "Heavenly Epic Discovery Project"
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/tbmu/HeavenlyEpicProject>

- Comment 59-1 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 59-2 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision

maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

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- Comment 59-4 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 59-5 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 59-6 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment Letter 60 – TRPA Governing Board Meeting, 9/24/14

TRPA GB Hearing – September 24, 2014

Governing Board comments/questions

- 1 Clem Shute – Asked about traffic analysis and whether there will be an increase in traffic. Asked about mitigation for roadway management plan and how that relates to water quality mitigation measures. When will a roadway mitigation plan be introduced – I am skeptical that it will be initiated if only a plan at this point.
Sue Norman and Bud Amorfini replied to questions to ensure that roadway maintenance and water quality mitigation measures will be implemented before new impacts occur. Requirements will become part of the USFS Special Use Permit and part of Lahontan's updated Waste Discharge Requirements.
- 2 Jim Lawrence – Asked about SEZ impacts other than Sky Meadows. Any others?
Rob Brueck answered that there are other locations with SEZ crossings (e.g., trail crossings), but the only SEZ impact considered to be significant was Sky Meadows because findings for new land coverage/disturbance could not be made for a non-linear facility.
- 3 Asked about the 2011 Act authorizing increased summer activities. Understand that it would allow for the consideration of summer activities. Is it also a mandate or directive to provide summer activities?
Nancy Gibson said she is not aware that it is a directive to provide such uses, only to study them as possibilities.
- 4 Tim Carlson – Believes that the USFS and special use permittee are encouraged to work to expand. Wants to know if there is more economic development data in the EIS. Thinks this information should be presented and included in the record for review of this project. What potentially beneficial impacts would the job growth create? Thinks that EIS documents should also include reasons for bringing the project forward.
John Marshall clarified that the purpose of the EIS is not to look at the reasons for doing the project, but the impacts associated with the Proposal and alternatives. The reasons suggested by Tim could be explained in the staff summary when a Project is brought forward for consideration after completion of the EIS process.
- 5 Shelly Aldean suggested that perhaps the project proponent could provide further details on potential economic benefits.
Nancy Gibson stated that the environmental analysis doesn't need to provide detailed economic benefit analysis (she referenced the purpose and need section of the EIS), but needs to address potential socioeconomic impacts.
- 6 Casey Beyer – Asked for the Resort's carrying capacity in winter.
Andrew Strain stated that it is capped at approximately 17,000 persons at one time. Currently it is operating at approximately 10,000.

- 7 | There is a mention of approximately 100,000 visitors currently in summer and a proposed increase of approximately 50,000. What is the season for these projects?
Andrew stated that most activities are summer use (mid June to mid Sept) but some would be used in winter as well.
- 8 | How will we monitor if there are too many persons using the off mountain connector trails?
Andrew stated that Heavenly will monitor operations working with USFS and other organizations that currently monitor use.
- 9 | How do you ensure that the activities do not conflict with each other – e.g., ziplines conflicting with trails on the ground.
Andrew mentioned that these types of potential conflicts were reviewed during initial planning by the experts brought in to layout the proposed above ground activities.
- 10 | Norma Santiago – How does Lahontan’s WDR update process line up with the consideration of Epic Discovery Project approval and implementation.
Bud Amorfini suggested that the WDR update will go concurrently with the start of Epic Discovery implementation. Mitigation of cumulative water quality impacts identified in the EIR/EIS/EIS will be addressed before or during implementation of the applicable Epic Discovery projects.

Public Comments

- 11 | Ellie Waller
Has substantial comments that she will submit in writing. How many new amenities are needed? This is a big package of amenities and should be looked at with the facilities added this summer.
- 12 | Alternative 1 just moves the forest flyer from one location to another, does not remove it from the Project.
- 13 | Has Lahontan looked at Northstar projects in the cumulative? A forest flyer is being litigated at Northstar because it was studied as a Neg Dec.
- 14 | Are there AQ issues with the guided tours – from the use of motor vehicles?
- 15 | Phil Humphries
Supports the Epic Discovery Project. Thinks that the project aligns well with the RPU. Area proposed for development is best suited for these improvements – I have hiked the area in the summer for many years and believe the projects fit in well. This project will help produce more year round jobs – helping us move away from the past gaming economy. This will help Heavenly attract more quality employees and families.
Type of activities proposed that are not currently provided are going to appeal to wide range of visitors – young to older, inactive to active, etc. These activities will be also be accessible to persons with disabilities, offering them another option for discovering the forest.

- 16 | Lon Rusk. Lakeside Inn and Casino.
Supportive of moving economy forward with increased outdoor activities. Thinks that we already offer many hiking, cycling, water activities in the Basin – thinks the multitude of choices proposed in Epic Discovery will result in incremental increases in “days of visits” for the average visitor.
Thinks the educational component will improve the way visitors treat the forest in other places.
- 17 | Chris Proctor. Barton Health
In favor of the project based on its health benefits and ways to increase cooperation with other health providers.
- 18 | Lauren Thomaselli. City of SLT Rec Manager.
The Project aligns wells with the proposed South Tahoe Recreation Master Plan. First, the SLT Plan is jointly funded by City and El Dorado County. City and County recognized that recreation is a key to our future economy. Heavenly’s project would increase year round recreational use of the mountain.
Epic Discovery is consistent with key goals of the Rec Master Plan.
The proposed Rec Master Plan Bijou Bike Park and other bike improvements are consistent with Heavenly’s Project. Will help residents improve biking skills so they can take them up on the harder trails at Heavenly and elsewhere in the Basin.
The need for better trails and connections showed up during Rec Master Plan public involvement and surveys.
The interpretative and educational component of Epic Discovery will connect visitors to the land that inspire better stewardship.
- 19 | Carol Chaplin. Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority
Supports the recreational activities that will help the area move from a gaming economy to a world class outdoor recreational area.
The project is planned for an existing development area.
- 20 | Michael Newberger. LTVA Marketing
Supports many of the positive comments already made by others.
Heavenly has been a good steward of their lands.
Regarding whether this is too much – increased opportunities provide reasons for visitors to return and the associated economic benefits.
- 21 | Bobby King. Edgewood Golf Course.
Concurs with much of what has been said before – supports the project.
Community needs more recreational opportunities – especially since they are located on a site previously disturbed for recreational use.
Edgewood is supportive of Projects that increase year round employment.

- 22 | Todd Poth.
Do we realize how lucky we are living here. I didn't grow up in Tahoe – grew up in Ohio without the outdoor activities we have here.
In other places I have traveled (e.g. Europe and New Zealand), they make better year round use of their recreational facilities. This Project better uses the National Forest lands and will educate visitors to be better stewards of the lands that they recreate within.
Thinks that increasing year round employment will result in better engagement by the residents – will be better land stewards than the transient employees that are not here full time.
- 23 | Deb Howard.
Is in favor of the Project. It will have a positive impact economically and socially. Project helps change travel behaviors – getting people out of their cars.
Emphasizes south shore's transition from gaming based economy to well rounded recreational based economy.
Year round employment will help employees become more involved in the community since they don't have to continually find new seasonal employment.
- 24 | Bea Gorman. Tahoe Chamber.
Tahoe Chamber has come out in support of Epic Discovery Project because of its alignment with our adopted community vision from 2013.
The opportunity to introduce visitors to our forest/environment will help educate visitors.
Year round jobs help the community attract better employees who will benefit the entire community.
Investment provides new capital to the Basin that will result in ripple effects and fund future projects and environmental improvements.
- 25 | Ben Fish. President TAMBA.
Fully supports the project. Heard overwhelming support for the mountain bike park aspects of the project. Allows easier access to more people – the more people engaged in our projects the better – breeds better stewardship when recreating in the forest.
Provides a safe place for families to recreate together.
- 26 | Ryan Gallas. Principal of Sierra House Elementary
Supports the Project.
Thinks the Project will improve economy – likes the opportunity for education on the mountain that can benefit our youth. Connecting local kids with nature and the mountain helps build life skills and reinforces healthy habits.
Our District has a unique partnership with Heavenly – the outdoors is the best classroom possible for science, stewardship, self discovery, etc.

Governing Board Comments

- 27 | Mimi Moss – This proposal contemplates many of the activities included in our Douglas County South Shore Plan. Local communities have identified these types of recreational opportunities as a need.
- 28 | Ryan High - Would any of the projects be used year round?
Rob Brueck explained that the aerial projects could be operated year round during both summer and winter operation periods.
- 29 | Shelly Aldean – Asked if any of the activities have to be removed for winter operations.
Rob Brueck explained that only temporary summer barriers (e.g., fencing near sensitive areas or along walkways/trails) would be removed at the end of the summer operating season. Aerial activities would remain in place and would not conflict with winter operations.
- 30 | Hal Cole – City supports the Project. At a time when public dollars are hard to come by, appreciates private investment in recreation.

Comment 60-1 Sue Norman and Bud Amorfini responded during the meeting to Board member Shute's questions to ensure that roadway maintenance and water quality mitigation measures will be implemented before new impacts occur. Requirements identified in the DEIR/EIS will become part of the Forest Service Special Use Permit and part of Lahontan's updated Waste Discharge Requirements.

Refer to Master Response 2 for additional discussion of the transportation impact analysis.

Comment 60-2 Rob Brueck responded during the meeting that there are other locations with SEZ crossings, but the only significant SEZ impact was Sky Meadows because findings for new land coverage/disturbance could not be made for a non-linear facility.

Comment 60-3 Nancy Gibson responded during the meeting that the 2011 Act (SAROE) directs that studies occur to identify possible summer activities, but does not believe the 2011 Act is a directive to provide them.

Comment 60-4 John Marshall responded during the meeting that the purpose of the EIS is not to evaluate the reasons for implementing a project, but to evaluate the impacts associated with the Proposal and alternatives. Economic development data could be provided in the staff summary during the decision-making process that occurs after completion of the EIS process.

The comment states that the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS should include more economic development data. Specifically, the commenter requests analysis of potential job

growth and other economic benefits. The purpose of the Heavenly Epic Discovery Draft EIR/EIS/EIS is to provide an evaluation of the proposed project's effects on the physical environment. Economic development information does not pertain to the adequacy, accuracy, or completeness of the environmental document, and therefore economic effects are not evaluated as part of the environmental impact analysis. The reviewing agencies may provide additional information on economic impacts as part of their consideration of the proposed project separately and independently from the environmental analysis of the EIR/EIS/EIS.

- Comment 60-5 Nancy Gibson responded during the meeting that the environmental analysis need only address potential socioeconomic impacts and is not required to provide a detailed economic benefit analysis. Refer to response to comment 60-4.
- Comment 60-6 Andrew Strain responded during the meeting that the carrying capacity of Heavenly Mountain Resort is approximately 17,000 persons at one time and currently operates at approximately 10,000 persons at one time.
- Comment 60-7 Andrew Strain responded during the meeting that the proposed uses would be primarily used in summer from mid-June to mid-September, but that some proposed uses would remain open in the winter.
- Comment 60-8 During the meeting, Andrew Strain responded that Heavenly will monitor operations, working with the Forest Service and other organizations currently monitoring trail use. The monitoring and mitigation protocol regarding adjacent NFS trails has been developed since the DEIR/EIS/EIS through cooperation with interested parties, and is included in Chapter 2.3.5 of the FEIS/EIS/EIS as the "Panorama multi-use trail partnership commitment." Among other things, this plan clearly defines roles, responsibilities, and appropriate measures to ensure the maintenance of facilities and the recreational experience across nearby recreational resources. The reader is referred to Section 2.3.5 of the revised DEIR/EIS/EIS for additional information.
- Comment 60-9 During the meeting, Andrew Strain responded that the types of potential conflicts were reviewed during the initial planning and layout of the proposed activities. The potential visibility and noise impacts of the proposed projects were analyzed and disclosed in the DEIR/EIS. The projects would be visible and could produce some noise, but otherwise would not result in impacts on activities on the ground. Guests at Heavenly Mountain Resort (a developed recreation area) would likely expect to see and hear other guests, so it is not anticipated that this would adversely impact their recreational experience.
- Comment 60-10 Bud Amorfini responded during the meeting that the WDR update will be concurrent with the start of implementation of the Epic Discovery Project and that mitigation of cumulative water quality impacts identified in the DEIR/EIS/EIS will be addressed before or during implementation of the applicable components of the Epic Discovery Project. Lahontan's waste discharge requirements were last updated amended in November 2013 under Board Order Number R6T-2003-0032A2 and will be updated again in response to the adoption/approval of the Epic Discovery Project to incorporate the requirements specified in Mitigation Measures WATER-C1a: CA-1 Erosion Reduction Measures and WATER-C1b: Amendment to MPA 07 Mitigation Measure 7.5-2, Ongoing Environmental Monitoring Program. The WDRs will also be responsive to the results, conclusions and recommendations presented in the annual

and cumulative monitoring reports that have been submitted for the on-going Environmental Monitoring Program. Mitigation Measure WATER C1a specifies that “prior to or concurrent with new permanent or temporary disturbance in the Sky Basin, the highest risk (i.e., those with the greatest potential for sediment loading to a channel) sources of erosion or “hotspots” that would have a direct effect on Heavenly Valley Creek channel and BMI scores shall be mitigated, as outlined in Appendix 3.1-F”. The status of implementation and effectiveness of these mitigation measures will be documented through mitigation measure 7.5-2 (ongoing Environmental Monitoring Program) and reported to TRPA, Forest Service and Lahontan in annual monitoring reports.

Comment 60-11 Responses to the referenced written comments can be found in the responses to comment Letter 17. Please refer to the Purpose and Need statement for the Project located in Section 1.3 on pages 1-3 through 1-5 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. The third paragraph under Section 1.3 states that the Project has been proposed in response to policy direction to provide year-round recreational opportunities and in response to visitor preferences. As evidenced by the letters in support of the Project, there is an existing demand, and Heavenly Mountain Resort has developed the components of the project in response to user demand. The Purpose and Need statement indicates that the Project has been proposed in response to the growing popularity of and demand for resource-based activities, including the addition of already successful attractions and new activities that broaden the appeal and range of activities for multi-generational visitors.

As stated on page 2-1 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS under Section 2.1, the Project was developed in response to the Federal Ski Area Recreational Opportunity Enhancement Act of 2011, which directs that studies occur to identify possible summer activities within ski resorts operating on National Forest System lands. The Project also supports goals of the TRPA Regional Plan Update, South Shore Area Plan, and Tourist Core Area Plan to develop and implement public outdoor recreation opportunities. The 2011 Act and TRPA plans do not establish a number or limit to new amenities, but suggest that such amenities be proposed and analyzed.

Chapter 3.13 Recreation provides recreational needs background. Please see the Environmental Setting in Section 3.13-2 beginning on page 3.13-1. The text under Section 3.13-2 includes the data on tourism, recreation engagement of visitors and the local population, and recreational goals and policies. Section 3.13-2 also provides data on existing activities at Heavenly Mountain Resort, wait times for existing recreational activities, and limitations of existing trails that may limit segments of the population from engaging in activities. The text also refers to recreational surveys conducted by Heavenly Mountain resort (page 3.13-5). These surveys indicate summer visitors at the top of the Gondola view the current range of activities as insufficient. Impact REC-C1 analyzes the Project’s cumulative impact to recreational uses and resources (page 3.13-36). The analysis finds that cumulatively, the Project would improve the variety of recreational opportunities and provide more diverse opportunities to appeal to a broader group of visitors.

Comment 60-12 The comment correctly states that Alternative 1 maintains the inclusion of a mountain coaster as a proposed facility, but in a different location within Heavenly Mountain Resort than the Project. While the Project proposes to locate the coaster

within Adventure Peak, Alternative 1 proposes to locate the coaster within Sky Meadows Basin.

The commenter appears to oppose development of a mountain coaster. An alternative with no mountain coaster was considered but eliminated from detailed study because elimination of this component would not meet the stated Purpose and Need for the Project by failing to offer a sufficient range of additional summer activities as stated in Chapter 2, Section 2.5, page 2-41 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. It was determined that a mountain coaster broadens public access to an experience otherwise unavailable to a significant portion of the visiting public.

Comment 60-13 Lahontan has considered the effects of cumulative projects on the affected watersheds (see the analysis in Chapter 3.1 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS); however Northstar and Heavenly Mountain Resort are located in different and unconnected watersheds at opposite ends of the region. Projects proposed at Northstar are under Lahontan's jurisdiction, but are located outside the Tahoe Basin and are in the area north of the greater Lake Tahoe region as opposed to the Epic Discovery Project located within the Lake Tahoe Basin in South Lake Tahoe. Projects at Northstar would not be applicable to this Project from Lahontan's watershed impact perspective. Unlike the Epic Discovery Project, projects at Northstar are located on private land, outside the jurisdiction of the Forest Service and the TRPA.

The environmental review process requires documentation and analysis of the proposed Project. While cumulative effects need to be considered, litigation of other projects and the type of environmental review of other projects is not required to be analyzed and is not applicable as litigation on the type of environmental document of other projects does not represent a physical change to the environment. Litigation of a project due to the type of environmental analysis conducted for that project would have little bearing on this Project, which is analyzed at the EIR/EIS/EIS level.

Comment 60-14 Air quality is addressed in Chapter 3.5 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. As discussed in Section 3.5-5.7 on page 3.5-45 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS, the Mountain Tours are included in the air emissions calculations for operations. Operations emissions, specifically including Mountain Tour vehicle engine exhaust, are shown in Tables 3.5-17, 3.5-18, 3.5-19, and 3.5-20 on pages 3.5-49 through 3.5-52 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS. The evaluation of the tables in sections 3.5-5.8, -5.9, and -5.10 on pages 3.5-48 through -53 indicate no significant impact. As shown in the tables and discussed in the impact analysis on pages 3.5-45 through 3.5-57 of the DEIR/EIS/EIS, no significant impacts are associated with construction or operation, including operation of the Mountain Tour vehicles.

Comment 60-15 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

Comment 60-16 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision

maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

- Comment 60-17 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 60-18 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 60-19 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 60-20 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 60-21 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 60-22 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 60-23 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 60-24 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.

- Comment 60-25 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 60-26 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.
- Comment 60-27 Comment noted. This is not a comment on the content or adequacy of the DEIR/EIS/EIS and no further response is warranted.
- Comment 60-28 Rob Brueck responded during the meeting that the aerial projects could be operated year round during both summer and winter operating periods.
- Comment 60-29 Rob Brueck responded during the meeting that only temporary summer barriers such as fencing near sensitive areas or along walkways and trails would be removed at the end of the summer operating season and that other aerial structures would remain in place and would not conflict with winter operations.
- Comment 60-30 Comments that state a position for or against a specific alternative are appreciated as this gives the Agencies a sense of the public's or other agencies feeling and beliefs about a proposed course of action. Such information can only be used by the decision maker(s) in arriving at a decision and not for improving the environmental analysis or documentation.